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## EDITORIAL - WHY A WOMEN'S WORONI?

This issue of Woroni is a women's issue. It is the first time for some years that Woroni has been entirely written and produced by women: women from many different groups, of different political persuasions and with very different ideas of feminism. We've worked together despite some of us opposing others in the current Students Association elections and despite the differences in time and energy to spare. We've produced something which is an indication of the huge diversity of talents, skills and ideas among women on and off the campus. One of the best things about the whole enterprise has been the sharing of skills and ideas that working co-operatively has made possible. We've all gained experience and confidence.

But why have a women's Woroni at all? We think the principle of a women's issue is important in a number of ways. This issue deals with subjects and issues which are of specific interest for women and which too often get pushed out or played down. We've included articles on services available to women in Canberra — Rape Crisis, Abortion Counselling and CYSS — and on significant women's activities this year like Reclaim the Night. There are articles on equal opportunity, sexual harassment grievance procedure and women in history, and in journalism.

Perhaps more importantly, this issue indicates and celebrates the talent and creativity of women. All of our work here — articles, poems, stories, drawings — appears in different and special contexts in a women's Woroni. It should be interesting and an example to all people — it shows what we are all capable of, how we can work together and what we can learn when we do. We hope that what you read in this Woroni will make you laugh, think, be angry and maybe read future Woronis differently. If you're a woman maybe you'll come and help us next time!



Thanks to  
Stephen Pratt

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# Letters

## IDENTITY CRISIS

I suppose I must have failed "Marriage I" last year — although my academic results for Arts were respectable. Academically second year Arts seems even better, though I'll probably fail "Marriage II" with merit. I didn't even leave ("drop-out") of Law School because it was a doyen of male patriarchy on campus, I just wanted to pursue my interests in Arts.

But I feel I am amidst an identity crisis brought on by my environment. I am not sexless but I enjoy the input of my fellow students both male and female in my tutorials and lectures and in my displacement activities such as sitting in the Ref. or the Union Bar. Sure, I've run into some male chauvinistic attitudes but then I once questioned some fems putting up anti-male posters outside the Chifley Library and asked them about *female* chauvinism — like the suffragettes in Britain they argued, you have to go to extremes to win the smallest of concessions.

I supported the campaign for better lighting on campus, applauded the enforced awareness of 'equal opportunity' accorded to women in university employment and I feel Women's Studies should be better supported by the Faculty of Arts in terms of staff. Perhaps I do let others, more enlightened, fight those battles for me, but perhaps my support of an altered status quo is more realistic than the more quid pro quo attitude of my radical 'sisters'.

I feel there has been a lot of revolutionary fervour which has blurred the extent to which many women's issues have been pushed. According to some of the more enlightening (?) toilet graffiti I have read, I (being representative of women in general) dress with the intent of attracting the male species (despite the fact I have failed Marriage I and am assured of failing Marriage II), and, by riding my bike or walking across campus at night I am tempting any passing male who is intrinsically sexually frustrated.

Let's be serious please.

Creating a healthy environment on campus should not be misrepresented to be an assault on every male because he is a male and therefore has dominant laviscious male traits. Neither should every female feel pressured for not being the 'enlightened' female she should be. I'm talking basic bio-chemistry and although social and economic conditioning has supposedly made every woman feel they have a limited and specific role within society — don't push me too far. Yes, I've had my share of sexist human experiences but I don't propose going through life living by paranoia. I feel an equal to most people I meet and hold myself out as one, but interestingly enough my more 'radical sisters' like to treat me as a less intelligent and narrow-minded *inferior* because I don't talk or act in terms of 'revenge'.

University is about awareness of expanding horizons yet it remains isolated in many ways from the mainstream of life. My enlightened sisters have obviously made me think out their cause but perhaps also added to my underlying cynicism about university 'education' as such. I realise a lot needs changing, the status of women particularly, but let's keep the issues associated with these changes more situation-specific. I am a woman and while not wanting to end up a sacrificial victim for the "women's cause", I rather think the campaign of general retribution against past male hegemony and the sins it has entailed, will merely help reinforce the vacuum which I feel has been created between the 'rad fems' and us — *male* and *female*.

A women's issue of 'WORONI' only helps make this vacuum more incredulous — if females don't feel they can print their articles in any other issue then they are conceding that the women's cause has become a negative strategy rather than a positive step forward.

*elizabeth stone*

Reply to Elizabeth Stone . . .

Elizabeth Stone's letter raises issues which are being discussed both within the women's movement and outside it. While I don't agree with much of what she says, her feeling of being "amidst an identity crisis" is shared by many women (feminists and non-feminists) and it is important that the reasons for this feeling are discussed.

The impression I get from the letter is that while she agrees with many feminist aims, she is uncomfortable with what she sees as an unnecessarily dogmatic and radical approach. While it's perhaps understandable that a sharp distinction is drawn between "rad fems" and other women, it is also very misleading to classify women this way. There are many different kinds of feminist, and to lump us all together in the category of "rad fems" is to blur important political and personal differences. For instance the label "rad fem" completely ignores the continuing debate between "radical feminists" and "socialist feminists" on directions which the women's movement takes. But besides the merely *intellectual* inadequacy of dividing women into two categories, it also has the effect of alienation many women from feminism because they perceive feminists as unapproachable, unfriendly, dogmatic and of course totally humourless.

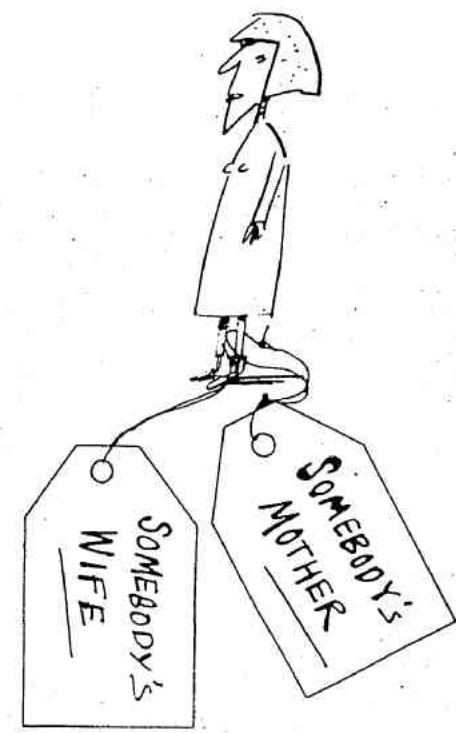
without reference to bias against women applicants (see *Sawer Towards Equal Opportunity*).

— In education, teachers pay far more attention to male pupils than to female pupils. Numerous studies have been made of the amount of time teachers spend in the classroom directing their comments to each sex, and it's generally about 70% to the boys and 30% to the girls. Similarly the kind of behaviour praised in boys and girls differs — girls are encouraged to be neat and well behaved, boys to be original and assertive (see Dale Spender *Women in Education*).

— Legally women are discriminated against particularly in the areas of family law and laws re sexual offences. When a couple divorces, it is almost invariably the woman who comes out worst off as far as property is concerned, because of the almost unlimited discretion given to the judge in deciding property matters (see Jocelyne Scutt *For Richer For Poorer*).

These three examples show how, while a woman may *feel* equal, in fact she is still at a severe disadvantage in many areas. This is not going to change unless women are willing to *fight* for change.

My second point relates to the feeling of being treated as an inferior by feminists. I don't know whether this is a reference to a specific occasion or a general



While perhaps to an extent feminists are to blame for this image, I think that largely it is an image created by the media and by men who can't cope with the threat posed by feminism to their dominant position in society. By stereotyping feminists, they marginalise us into being viewed as the lunatic fringe. However, in fact it is the so-called rad fems on campus who are active, not only in obvious campaigns like the "Curfew on Men" posters, but also on various committees which *affect* the position of women on this campus. It is the 'rad fems' who look into issues like childcare, equal employment opportunity, and lighting and safety on campus.

Elizabeth Stone says that she supports the campaign for better lighting, EEO and Women's Studies. But, she says, while she feels an equal to most people and holds herself out as one she is treated an inferior by her more "radical sisters". There are two points to be made here. The first is that, while it's excellent that women feel equal, it is a sad fact that no matter how good we feel about ourselves, very often we are simply not *treated* as equals. There are many illustrations of this.

— As Marion Sawer points out, the number of women in tenured positions at the ANU is very small, smaller than would be expected given the number of qualified women who apply for those positions. The conclusion of three studies is that this cannot be explained

feeling. If Elizabeth Stone is referring to the conversation outside Chifley Library, I (as one of the women there) can only say that there was no intention of treating her as an inferior — in fact I thought we had quite a good conversation even though we didn't agree on everything.

Finally, I'd like to comment on Elizabeth's claim that the issues associated with the status of women should be kept more "situation specific". First, feminists *do* fight around specific issues — the lighting campaign and Equal Employment are proof of this. However, we see these matters as being part of a wide social movement for the true emancipation of women in all areas, encompassing political, legal and personal concerns.

A women's *Woroni* is an active encouragement to women to have our say and to look at issues which concern us. It also enables women to develop the skills associated with producing a publication — skills which women don't often have. Rather than being a negative strategy, it's a positive assertion of the fact that women have a lot to offer. Women do print articles in other issues of *Woroni*, but a specifically Women's Issue draws attention to the fact that there is still much that has to be said by and for women.

*marina farnan*

# CLOSING ROXBY DOWNS

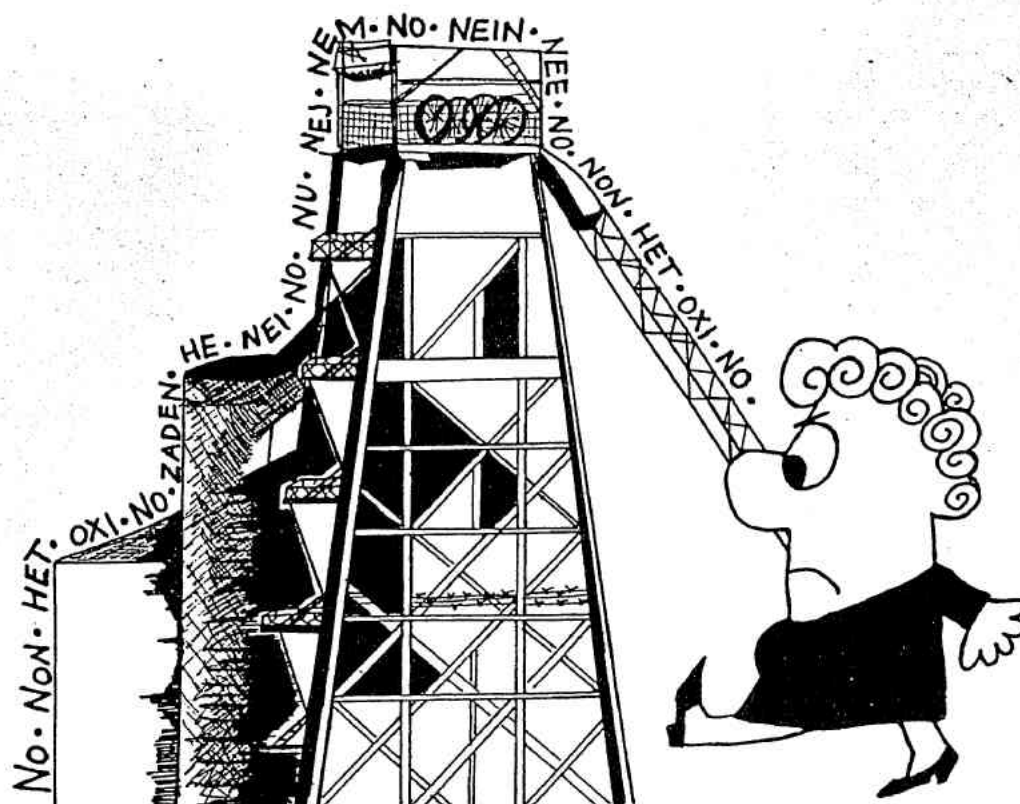
## What is Roxby Downs?

Roxby Downs is a uranium mine in South Australia, situated near what could be the largest uranium deposit in the world. The area also contains rich deposits of copper, gold, silver, and rare earth metals. These other ore-lodes have generated the excuse that Roxby is not, first and foremost, a uranium mine; yet the forecast production of uranium is 3,000 tonnes per annum.

Mining takes place under an indenture agreement between the joint venturers, Western Mining Corporation and B.P., and the South Australian Government, which has invested \$50 million in the project. At the moment, mining is still in the pilot stage of production and processing: in theory it's an experiment in mining economics. In effect it is the source of Australia's current export of yellowcake to Finland. Between Roxby and its use in Finnish nuclear power stations, this material is not covered by international safeguards.

## Why Close the Mine?

There are good reasons for preventing the mining of uranium anywhere: its role in the proliferation of nuclear weapons; danger to the health of miners, carriers, people who live in the vicinity; the unsolved problem of waste disposal; the increased likelihood of nuclear accidents. There are specific reasons for stopping uranium mining at Roxby Downs. The land around Roxby is traditionally owned/used by the Kokotha people. Roxby Management Services has repeatedly failed to recognise the Kokotha's claims and requests. They have denied access to, and completely destroyed, areas the Kokotha regard as sacred. When in full operation, Roxby Downs will use 33 million litres of water a day from the Great Artesian Basin: enough to reduce the water table significantly, and cause irreparable damage to the local environment. The \$50 million invested by the state Government has diverted funds from more worthwhile areas, and has fuck-all chance of being recovered by 3.5 percent royalties. Royalties will only be earned IF the mine can produce at 85 percent of its capacity for 60 consecutive days: an industrial miracle.



## The Rolling Roxby Blockade

This year's blockade of Roxby Downs was organised by the Coalition for a Nuclear-Free Australia (CNFA), an umbrella group of over 90 trade union, peace, environment, feminist, Aboriginal and church groups committed to stopping uranium mining and prohibiting nuclear weapons and all other stages of the nuclear fuel cycle in Australia. Canberra people were represented at the blockade by a wimmin's group: the Nuclear Re/sisters, a group of students /unpaid workers: the Bogongs, and four or five hardy individuals.

The Bogongs and Nuclear Re/sisters are "affinity groups", small numbers of people (usually 8-12) who have sussed each other out, and can plan actions together, provide emotional support for each other, make decisions quickly if necessary, work together, and if things are going well, have stacks of fun.

There were two types of action at this year's blockade: mass actions, involving large numbers of people from the base camp, centered around fairly broad themes, and affinity-group actions, involving smaller groups of people with a more specific focus. Mass actions mainly occurred outside the lease area, affinity-actions inside. Mass actions were mainly during the day, affinity-actions at night. Mass actions got the best media coverage in terms of quantity, but not always in terms of quality.

## Good Mass Actions

We went as Bogongs, after a long and sometimes traumatic/frustrating search for a name. Some of us went by car, some by bus, one rode a bicycle. The first contact we car people had with the blockade was at Nurrungar, a US communications base about 90km from Roxby Downs. (Strange how all those sinister things happen in the desert. eh? Pine Gap, Roxby, Woomera, Nurrungar, Maralinga...)

UNDIG ERASURE  
DISCLAIMER: this article is AN impression. It doesn't pretend to represent the view or analysis of anyone who went to Roxby, other than the author. It certainly doesn't represent here.

## ANOTHER LETTER; Odgers is corrected

This letter is a response to Kendall Odgers's letter in the last Woroni: "Nuclear Power - an absolute necessity".

Kendall points to the "blind emotion" of the anti-nuclear movement who supposedly ignore "undeniable" scientific fact. It is surprising that Kendall has so much faith in the articles by Professor Bernard Cohen which he claims are so undisputable. The fact that a name has a "Professor" in front of it does not immediately make a person unbiased and even. In fact, the blatant incorrectness of some of Kendall's facts proves that these articles do have a bias.

For example, Kendall states that according to the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission "there would have to be a melt-down every two weeks to match the number of deaths caused by coal burning." This statement ignores the lasting effect which radiation has on the environment and the human population in the form of debilitating diseases such as bone cancer and leukemia. The narrow-sighted habit of looking only at immediate ecological impacts and ignoring the long-term lasting ones is what has brought the world to the brink of ecocatastrophe today.

Kendall pursues the idea of nuclear power being superior to coal power and complains about how the anti-nuclear movement fails to recognize the dangers of coal power over nuclear power.

This is a blatant misrepresentation of the anti-nuclear movement. People involved in the struggle against the nuclear industry are fully aware of the dangers of the coal-power industry. No-one from the anti-nuclear movement has ever advocated a return to the situation where all our power needs are supplied by coal. In fact, recognizing that both coal and uranium are finite non-renewable resources, the anti-nuclear movement is advocating the development of renewable power sources such as solar energy, wind energy, biogas, geothermal energy and tidal power. These are not unfeasible (it is possible now to run a house entirely on solar energy), and if more funds were allocated into research instead of into unprofitable and ecologically unsound nuclear industry, these sources could be developed on a larger scale.

The link between nuclear power and nuclear weapons proliferation is another fact which Kendall attempts to question. However by making such ludicrous statements as "Even if all peaceful nuclear reactors were to cease operating, there would be absolutely no difference in the number of warheads possessed by the nuclear powers," he is ignoring the fact that the major threat caused by the spread of nuclear technology is that of

nuclear arms proliferation to countries which do not have them.

The statement in Kendall's letter about the unlikelihood of nuclear war reveals yet another flaw in his argument. It is naive to go along thinking that nuclear weapons are solely for the purpose of deterrence. The fact that the superpowers are now engaged in developing a first strike strategy (aimed at destroying military targets) brings the possibility of nuclear war closer and closer.

The fact that the nuclear industry is ridiculously expensive and wasteful of public funds is attributed, by Kendall, to the fact that the public is demanding ridiculously high safety standards. I shudder to think of the kinds of dangers we would all be exposed to were these safety standards dropped, considering the dangers we face even with the existence of these safety standards.

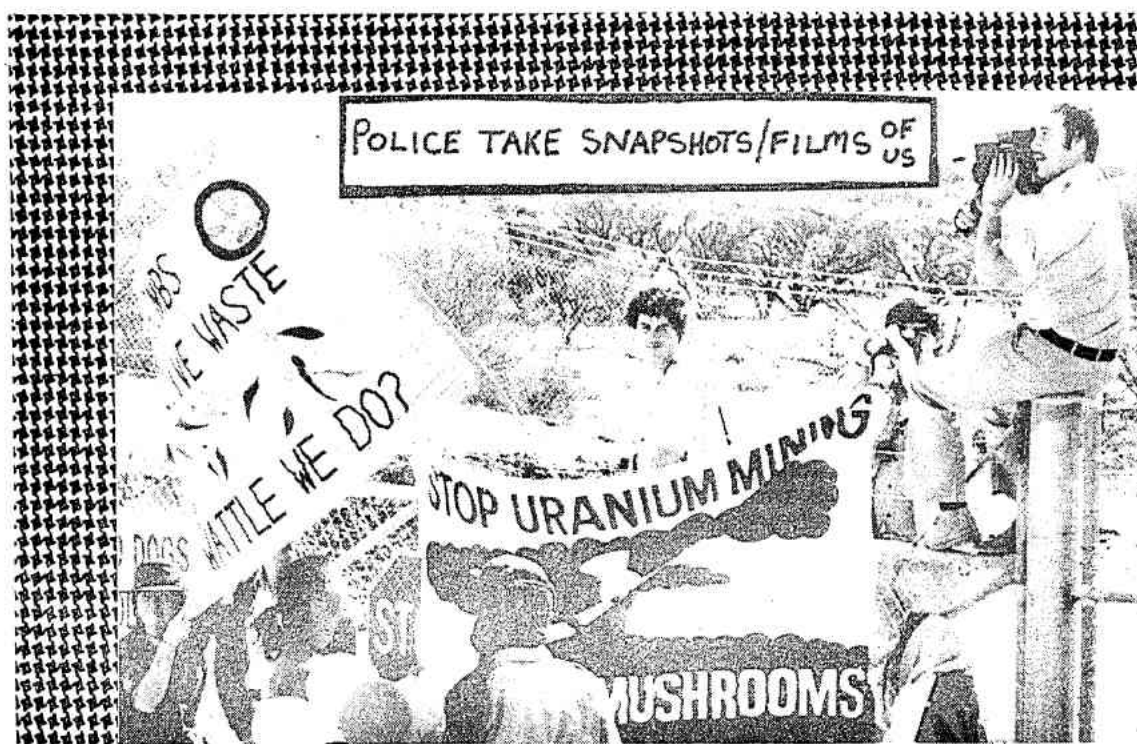
Why does Kendall suspect the anti-nuclear movement of hoodwinking the public with their facts about the nuclear industry. Why does he blindly believe the 'facts' of bodies like the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission and people like Professor Bernard Cohen? This unquestioning trust of authority figures and mistrust of those who question their so-called unbiased statistics is sadly misplaced.

*sango mahanty*

A peaceful action had been planned for that afternoon, a pleasant enough Tuesday, we ate the last of our hommus and chatted with a few nice Commonwealth police. We met a few "stars" of the blockade that first day: silly old men with big mouths: like "The Hobbit", who proclaimed that it was "his" action - because he thought of it first: that any statement had to be "a proposal" - or else it was a waste of time. Like Mr "Fade", who claimed we were there too early, but said we could stay if we told other people to piss off, "like, er... tell 'em to... you know... faade..." - until 4.00, the appointed hour.

So we hung around, welcoming other early arrivals, sussing things out. It turned out to be the best mass action that happened while we were there: 250 people marching, singing, with banners held high, arms linked, towards an American military installation in the middle of the desert. Some people hid their cameras when they saw the sing. A cyclist got to within 50 metres of the base that night, and took colour photographs undetected.

Seven people were arrested when they tried to enter the base. Three people were allowed in to talk with the joint Australian commander, who answered "no comment" to nearly all their questions.



#### Good small-scale actions

There were heaps of well-planned, inventive excursions into the mine-site in the middle of the night(s). Some actions were predominantly symbolic - others sought to physically hinder mining operations.

The Re/sisters took with them lots of drawings of wildlife and plants done by Canberra kids. They laid these out on a major road, leaving truck-drivers with two options: they could stop and talk with the group about their reasons for being there - or they could drive on and destroy the pictures and wildlife.

The Bogongs' main action was the construction and implantation of giant cardboard windmills and suns - representing safe forms of energy - throughout the mine site.

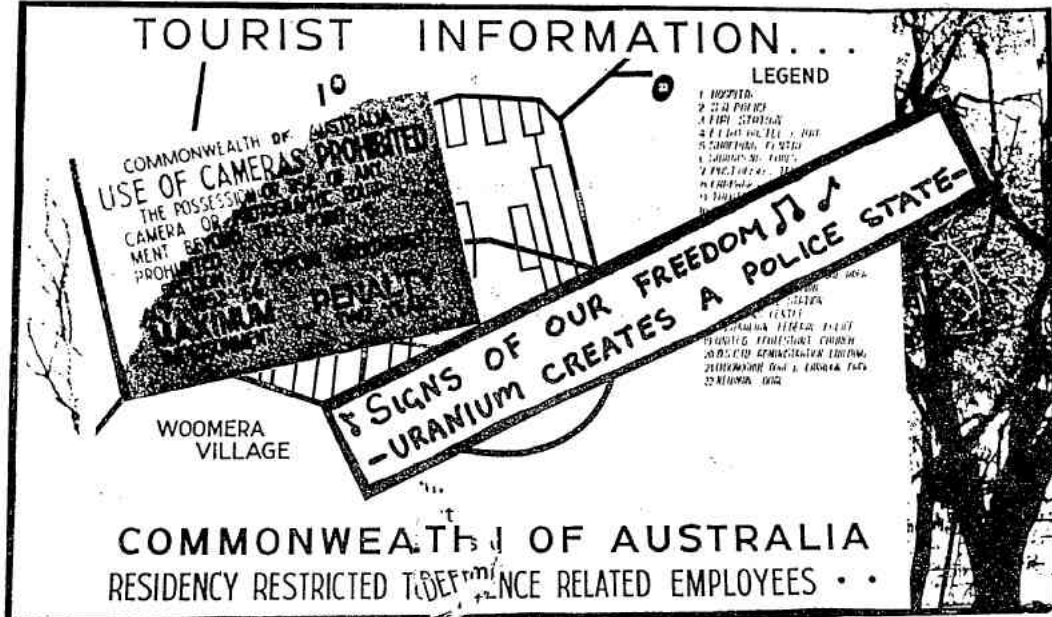
Direct hindrance actions included chaining up gates, putting super-glue in locks and padlocks, burying more than 100 metres of fence that still hasn't been found and chaining bodies to fences.

SAFE ENERGY, SAFE ENERGY, SOME FROM THE SUN, SOME FROM THE WATER TOO, & SOME YOU MAKE WHEN YOU'RE HEALTHY FOR ALL & NOT FOR WEALTH FOR A FEW WITH SAFE ENERGY (3 BLIND MICE)

The most extreme case of the latter form of action involved Robyn and Pablo being locked to a gate by wearing bicycle U-locks around their necks. U-locks can't be cut with bolt-cutters, so it took four hours for them to be removed. After talking oxy-acetylene, workers eventually cut them loose with an angle grinder.

Perhaps the most dubious aspect of being forced to work at night, under high security (including helicopters with spotlights and a heat-sensor), was the adoption of semi-commando tactics by blockers: crawling through sand-dunes in dark clothes, black-faced, hiding in shadows at the sound of helicopter rotors.

### TOURIST INFORMATION...



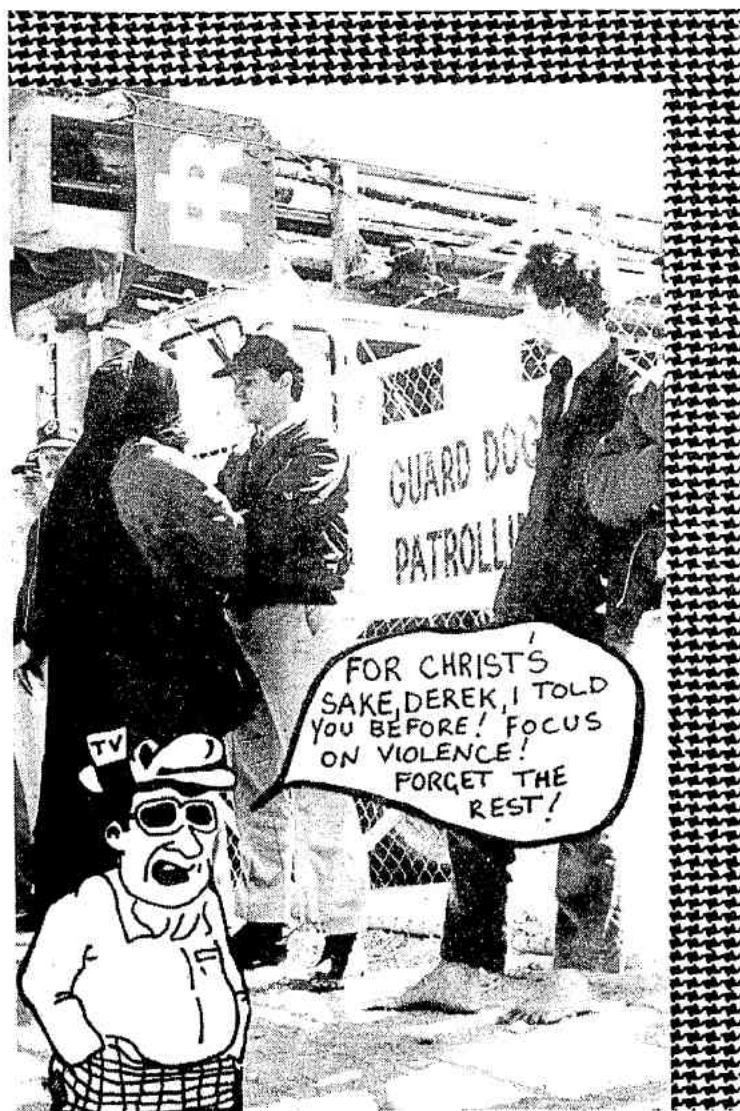
#### Fucking Wonderful Mass Actions.

Bit of a bummer, really: we missed it by a couple of days. People from the Women's Space organised an action to unite all the womyn in the camp, to generate solidarity and a feeling of empowerment in a symbolic show of strength against the main gate. More than 70 womyn went down to the fence intending to sing songs, weave webs and things through the wire, and rattle the fence to vent their anger at it. A lot of peaceful, angry womyn, a rather feeble fence. After a few rattles, the fence started coming apart in their hands, so they pulled it to the ground, sat on it, and kept singing. After about 20 minutes eight womyn were selected from the crowd and arrested for wilful damage to property.

#### Shitful Mass Actions

Thursday afternoon you maybe know about: it got the most extensive media coverage of the whole blockade. The mainstream media still thrives on violence and misrepresentation. One analysis says that everyone present was responsible: for not defusing the anger and violence of our comrades. Another says that men with personal vendettas with particular police and consumption of alcohol are a recipe for disaster at any mass action.

There were maybe valid reasons for extreme anger: the brutal eviction of vigil people from their camp by the SA Riot police a month before the blockade; the presence of a particular police officer at the main gate: but they're shitful reasons for violent and inflammatory behaviour in a group of 150 demonstrators and 100 police. Tension and violence escalates; it's difficult to defuse anger in front of a large crowd: particularly in the presence of stacks of media and cops.



#### What happens now?

There are still people at the blockade, action reports are still filtering through. But on an organised scale the 1984 Roxby Blockade is over, leaving a lot of unresolved questions for all of us to be thinking about:

- \* Are mass blockades effective or worthwhile?
- \* Should mass actions be abandoned as too unwieldy?
- \* Is it possible to tolerate the behaviour of, let alone work effectively with, large numbers of strange (let the ambiguity have its play) men?
- \* How can violence be defused most efficiently?
- \* How can we improve media coverage?
- \* Where does effectiveness lie?

On Friday 5th October, there'll be a public meeting to discuss this year's blockade, including reports from people who went, slides, photographs, and a memorabilia collection. Come along and hear the claims made in this article countered. That's 8pm in the Haydon-Allen Tank.

Margaret Emerton

# WOMEN, TECHNOLOGY, and the MEDIA.

Technology has become the most powerful god in our society, far outstripping the tinsel gods of Christianity, for it is through technology that men are finally gaining the ability to create and destroy the world we live in (e.g. clones, genetic engineering, neutron bombs, etc.). Like most gods, technology is not of itself, evil, it is the old problem of who controls the gods and for what purposes. If technology is seen as God the Father, all wise all powerful etc., then the media is God the Son. It is through the printed, visual and audio media that we hear the voice of the ruling culture, that specifically male ethos which deals almost exclusively in death consciousness. The media shapes our present, defines our past and moulds the future. It has the power to reassure, undermine, determine attitudes, reinforce stereotypes, to delight, to frighten, and it has this power because many people have consciously yielded up their human intelligence to the lollyshop of all their desires.



For all these reasons and many more it is important that women are seen and heard in the media. And it is for these reasons again that women are mostly not seen or heard in the mainstream media — but are visible and articulate in alternative forums such as Public Radio, radical newspapers and public television. It is in these areas that we are gaining the technical skills to operate equipment, learning the basics of lay-out and design, the mechanics of tape decks and consoles, of cameras and lighting. Working to demystify the mythology that technology is complex and scientific and for boys only. Working at translating the complex technological jargon that has been invited solely to keep technology in the hands of the experts — where only the chosen have access to the innermost secrets of the god and a knowledge of the rituals.



Women in the media are also changing the message of the gods. They are talking about women, about their lives, about our collective history, they are uncovering our real past. They are talking about rape, child-molesting, menstruation, childbirth, about men and their power and their hatred. They are talking and writing about female sexuality, about difference about commonality and they are not interested in perpetuating the myths about our weakness, our dependence or our need for male malevolence.

And they are shaping a new future for the women who see and hear and read, and they are collectively creating images for women which are outside the boundaries of the received wisdom, images of women as powerful, as human as individuals. Of woman as sisters, mothers, daughters, wives heterosexuals, lesbians, bisexuals. Images which do not reflect the

desires or the insecurities of a male culture. And they are not saying that they have a monopoly on the truth, or that they are the final authority box. They are working within one of the most powerful male strongholds in our society in a manner which appalls most of their male counterparts, women are working within collectives, without hierarchies, working at consensus, working at sharing skills and with a philosophy that everyone should do some of the shitwork and everyone should get some of the kudos.

Given all this, it is not surprising that they are mostly perceived as evil, as lesbian ratbags, Marxist-feminist-separatist anarchists. That their work is derided, trivialised or ignored. That they often become exhausted, disillusioned, burnt-out or give it all up. But, mostly, they continue, working in conditions that no man would spit on, working for long hours, under paid, the victims of enumerable expectations, of political attack, of unjust and irrational criticisms.



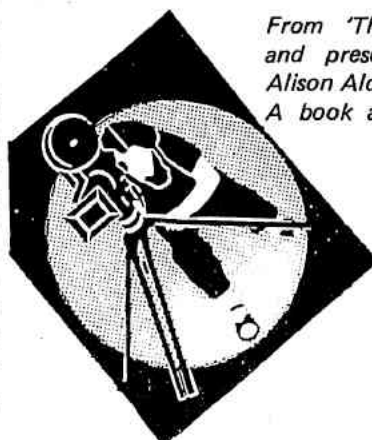
For we do all this because we believe, and belief is a very sustaining emotion, we believe mostly in ourselves, in other women, in our right to define and describe our own experiences, to control our lives and to choose our own alternatives. We believe in our right to explode the media myths, to perceive our society for what it is and what it is doing to women, and mostly in our right to share all this information with other women and with men. We believe in our ability to use technology for purposes other than the control and training of mass consciousness in a consumer society.

Undermining the God of technology and changing the message of his son, the Media, is no light undertaking and we do it because it needs to be done, because it is the kind of task that crazed feminists like myself feel is important and meaningful and involves a level of politicisation that is beyond myself — because I have the sustaining love of my sisters, their belief, their humour and their commitment — and because I really believe that there is no closing date for the getting of wisdom.

Kate McNamara

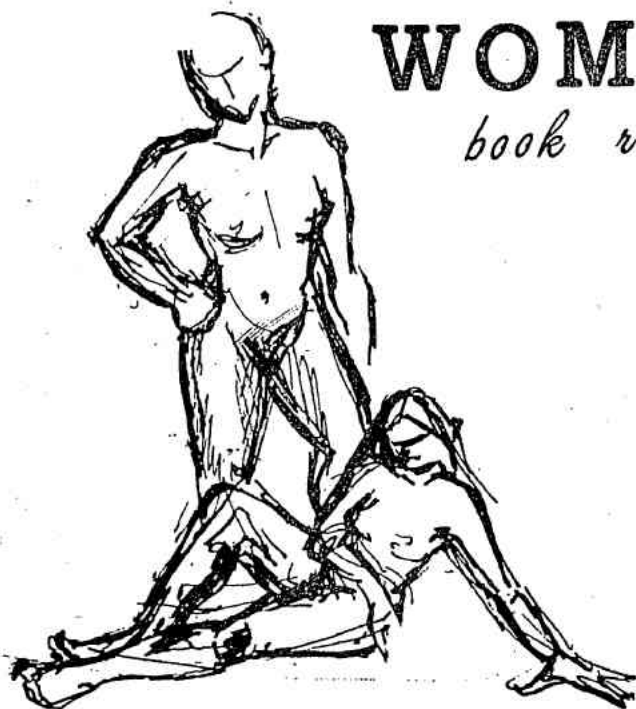
From 'The True Bird Grit'. Produced and presented by Julia Church and Alison Alder.

A book about Canberra women in the Arts 1982-83)



# WOMEN and SEXUALITY

book reviews book reviews book reviews



Fifteen years after the rise of the new wave of the Women's Movement, there has been a revival (much needed and very refreshing) of discussion about women's sexuality. One of the greatest strengths of the Movement in its early days was its emphasis on the notion that 'the personal is political'. The Women's Movement insisted that what happened behind bedroom doors was a political issue, and drew attention to the 'double standard' which dictated what was acceptable sexual behaviour for women and men. As well, the Movement was a recognition of women's common experience of oppression, as women, in all aspects of life — social, political, economic, and sexual. Since then, numerous books and articles have been written, drawing attention to the existence of the power relation between the sexes, the power that men have over women — Kate Millett's *Sexual Politics* and Shulamith Firestone's *The Dialectic of Sex* are two of the early examples — and a more diverse range of sexual practices began to be talked about, and explored.

Lesbianism became a public issue, and many women saw feminism as a linear development towards lesbianism — they rationalised that since women's subordination was the result of men's dominance over women — social, political and economic — which was manifest in sexual relations between the sexes, hitherto considered 'natural' this sexual relation, at least, must be rejected, and sexual relations moved to a higher plateau. This simplistic assertion became, for many women, the solution to oppressive relationships with husbands, or male lovers.

After this initial outburst of writings and discussion about sexuality as a political issue, the Movement slipped into an uncomfortable silence. After all, if lesbianism was the revolutionary alternative, what more needed to be said?

Thankfully, feminists have again started to question the nature of sexual relations, and sexual desires. Taking up at the point where earlier theorists had left off, after finding that, in practice, the answers provided by earlier writers fell far short of the theory — relationships between women were not the easy solution they had promised to be — there are now developing sophisticated analyses of the social construction of our sexuality, our desires, our pleasure. From here there is being undertaken an examination of the power that exists in all relationships, lesbian as well as heterosexual.

I intend to review four of the more recent works on sexuality, which have been written in Britain and the United States, all of which raise and discuss the issues that are central to the new debates centering on women's sexuality.

## Female Desire

The first is *Female Desire: Women's Sexuality Today*, by Rosalind Coward. In the author's own words

"The aim of *Female Desire* is to examine how presumptions about female pleasure and female desire are shot through so many cultural practices and to look at the way our desire is courted even in our most everyday experiences as women."

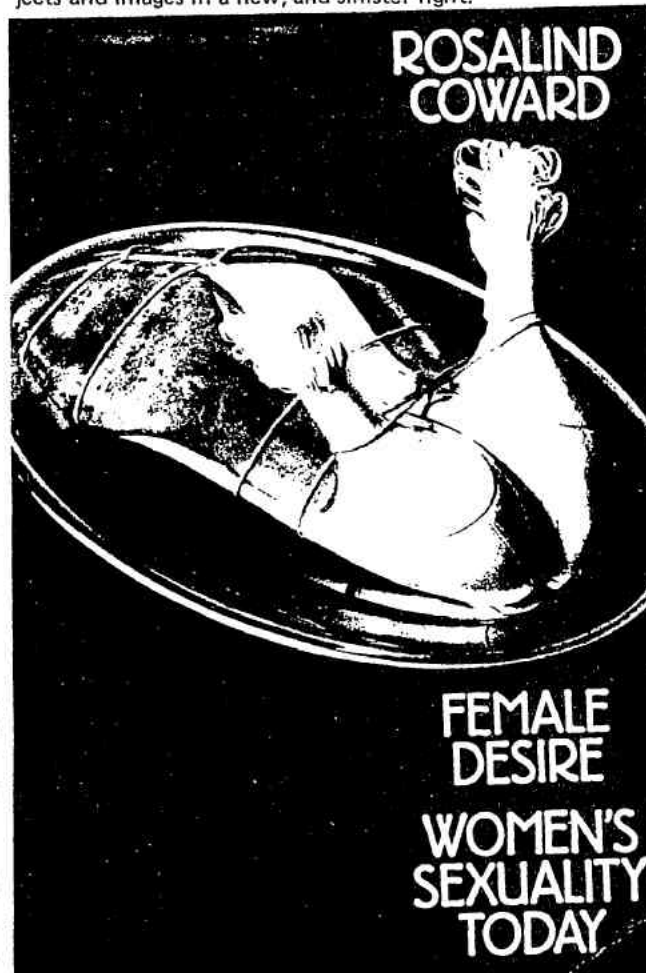
Coward illustrates convincingly the connections between women's socially constructed 'desires' — those things that apparently or actually give us pleasure — and the needs of capitalism to sell products: "Pleasure is this society's permanent Special Offer."

The ideals that are offered to women, ideals of future perfection — of perfect homes, perfect bodies, perfect relationships — through the consumption of products, serve only to maintain the status quo, making acceptable, even desirable, the things that within

this society, are most oppressive to women, while at the same time hiding or denying the possibility for change. For example, the ideal of motherhood and the goal of attaining a perfect home — clean, neat and tastefully-decorated — manage to disguise the fact that women are made responsible for the bulk of domestic work and childcare, which go unpaid and socially unrecognised as 'real work'. These ideals that are offered to us, ideals that do not exist, except as photographic techniques in magazines or on television, or as elaborate fantasies, act as a foil to the frustrations of everyday life.

*Female Desire* looks at 'pleasure' in a variety of different cultural forms — food, photographs, pornography, royalty, men's bodies, relationships, fantasies — and tries to analyse these apparent offers of pleasure, and the way in which these pleasures themselves are controlled, stage managed. Coward argues that the representations of female desire and pleasure are not unchanging, universal or 'natural', but act to produce and sustain the feminine position and male privilege.

The book, presented in the form of a series of short essays, with graphics, is easy to read, and accessible. Its challenge lies in the fact that it makes few conclusions in itself, allowing the reader to draw her own. After reading it, it is impossible not to see once familiar objects and images in a new, and sinister light.



## Sex & Love

*Sex and Love: New Thoughts on Old Contradictions* is also a collection of essays, this time by a number of different authors, edited and introduced by Sue Cartledge and Joanna Ryan. Like *Female Desire*, it also addresses the question of the social construction of our sexuality. Specifically, it concentrates upon sexual love relationships, and the way emotions, desires and relationships are themselves shaped by society. Some of the essays question the importance and primacy given to sexual relationships, others challenge the notion of 'falling in love' — seeing in it a relinquishing or denying of responsibility for having made choices. It also examines how our choices are determined, to an extent, by external factors. The essays also examine feminist heterosexuality, and the power dynamics in heterosexual relationships, but the essays on lesbian relationships make it clear that those relationships are also not devoid of a 'power dynamic'. Other essays engage in debates about bisexuality, celibacy, feminist 'moralism' and sex and childbirth.

The essays all, in some way, address themselves to the question of the connection between sex, love, and romance, in both lesbian and heterosexual relationships. This collection can be seen as part of the process of development in ideas about sexuality. It brings an understanding of the notion of the 'social construction of sexuality, and focusses on the material and ideological influences acting upon us, and the

mediation of these through the family and other institutions. The articles are historical and personal accounts of women, working through and learning from the contradictions that the authors have encountered in their own sexual love relationships. Here lies the book's importance, in trying to develop an analysis, a theory of the connection between that very personal area of our lives, and wider social structures, a connection that has been little understood, despite the interest in 'personal politics' within the Women's Movement. The authors draw attention to the lack of language through which women can talk about our sexuality — for most words that describe parts of our body are either slang words ('cunt', 'tits') with derogatory implications, or are clinical and sterile, the words that describe what women do are passive rather than active — confirming society's popular attitude that "good girls don't", and condemning women who are sexually active as 'promiscuous'; impounding women's socially constructed role of passivity, and men's role of sexual assertiveness. These discussions allude to the difficulty of lesbian relationships, the lack of roles by which women lovers can assert their sexual desires and fantasies.

## Desire: The Politics of Sexuality

A similar work to *Sex and Love* from the United States, is *Desire: The Politics of Sexuality*. Like *Sex and Love*, it is a collection of essays, by a great variety of authors, female and male. It is edited by Ann Snitow, Christine Stansel and Sharon Thompson. The essays highlight the political and theoretical issues behind different sexual practices, and, like *Sex and Love*, raises issues such as the historical changes in the meaning of sex and the power of fantasy. The essays illustrate how meanings attached to sexual behaviour vary dramatically between cultures and in different historical moments. It sees sexual practices as shaped and affected by other social structures and in relation to other historical forces — the intervention of the state, men's power over women, divisions between races and classes. It also looks at how sexual identities are constructed and how desire is structured, in order to understand the meaning that sexual activity and desire have in the lives of individuals.

*Desire* is a new attempt at sexual honesty. It examines ideas about sex — as 'natural', as a refuge from the harshness of other aspects of life, as 'instinctive' — and investigates the relationship between patterns of desire and fantasy, and the social institutions of sexual relations. It questions the prescriptiveness of the slogan 'the personal is political', the narrow sexual 'reductionism' inherent in the idea that desire in heterosexual relationships is always expressed in terms of dominance or submission. As such, the book opens up new issues of enquiry to feminists — whether desires of dominance and submission necessarily uphold the institution

## Sex & Love



New thoughts on old contradictions

edited by Sue Cartledge & Joanna Ryan

cont....

of male dominance; whether we should try to understand what forces are at work in shaping our sexuality, as it is expressed in these terms, or whether we should merely try to suppress these desires as 'heretical', if and when they surface.

The contents of the book consists in fictional pieces - short stories and poetry - as well as more strictly theoretical essays, all of which touch in some way upon the questions that are central to the book's purpose. Interestingly, the introduction to the British edition of the book, which establishes the book's major preoccupations, is written by Rosalind Coward, author of *Female Desire*. She draws attention to the similarities between *Desire* and *Sex and Love*.

### Coming To Power

*Coming to Power* is the fourth book I reviewed. It is subtitled *Writings and Graphics on Lesbian S/M* (sadosomasochism). Sadosomasochism is defined in the book's introduction as "a form of eroticism based on a consensual exchange of power". It is, I think, a valuable contribution to the debates on sexuality, and the issues raised within the debate, which I have outlined in the article. This is because it represents itself as the most diverse of sexual practices. Not surprisingly, it is also the most controversial both within and outside the Women's Movement. It is, as yet, still very much a 'closet' issue, and is viewed by many as 'anti-feminist'. It is, at one and the same time, a product of the dissatisfaction with the earlier 'answers' to the oppressive nature of heterosexual relations, a reaction to feminist 'moralism' about heterosexual sex, and an initiator of the current debates.

S/M is a re-examination of our politics of sex and power. It is a challenge to the emotional imbalances of power in relationships - both heterosexual and lesbian - , the unrealisable expectations many of us have concerning 'love' relationships, from which pain is the inevitable result (yes! even in lesbian relationships).

The theory of s/m recognises the hitherto unacknowledged power roles within lesbian relationships, in practice, it attempts to work towards resolving the imbalance. So far, so good. S/m lesbians look to sexual s/m - the acting out physically of 'top' and 'bottom'/ active and passive roles - as a way of working out and dealing with power roles that are inherent in every relationship.

However, not everyone would automatically look to physical s/m as a release form, or a working out of these power roles that exist. Not should we... after all, physical s/m raises further question that as yet remain unanswered - why do we desire to give or receive pain (albeit consensual)? and why do we find this submission or dominance erotic? Physical s/m is not, after all, a breaking away from the existence of power in our sexuality as it is socially constructed within a patriarchal society, it is simply another, more extreme manifestation of power. Surely we need first to ask why these roles exist, how it is that we fall into them, and repeat them, over and over again?

The value of s/m as a theory and a practice is that it opens up areas previously uncovered in the past fifteen years since the beginning of the new Women's Movement, areas which are of great importance to the debates about sexuality today, as it is a more sophisticated analysis of the power relations between people, the seemingly inescapable roles that we automatically take on, when we enter into sexual love relationships.

Diane Hamer

# EEO REVISITED...

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITY UPDATE

Marian Sawer

By August a large part of the University's EEO Program (as set out in the Recommendations of *Towards Equal Opportunity*) had been approved by Council. Significant changes to personnel practices, particularly in the area of recruitment, selection and access to staff development opportunities had been set in train. Women were beginning to play a more active role on university committees and more women were obtaining information about the running of the university. The establishment of *AWE-Inspired*, the newsletter of the Association of Women Employees, has facilitated the sharing of information and the empowerment of women. Because women are usually excluded from the informal networks which exist at all middle management levels and above at the university, we often lack vital information about the organisation in which we work.

The passage of the Sex Discrimination Act and the proximity of the Sex Discrimination Commissioner is also making women more confident in claiming equality of opportunity. More women are speaking out about being automatically allocated domestic chores or routine tasks while their male colleagues are placed in 'fast track' positions. Women keyboard workers are demanding the right to a career structure and an end to the automatic devaluing of their skills.



Meanwhile many women at the University are still trapped in the most hazardous occupation devised by men for women - word processing. The University Health Service has now seen 176 cases of repetition strain injury, almost wholly among women employees, and 100 claims for compensation have been lodged in twelve months. The university has been providing assertion training to help women to say no to unreasonable demands - perhaps more courses are needed for unreasonable academics and users of women's services.

The university has also leafleted schools and colleges in the ACT and Queanbeyan to encourage more girls to think about non-traditional jobs at the university (see the picture below of Sue Kennedy operating a lathe in the RSPHysS workshop).

Movement is slower on the academic side of the university - only 6.5 percent of women employees are in academic positions and the old emotional slogans of 'academic freedom', 'academic excellence', and 'my wife' are still used to sidetrack the identification of obstacles to equal opportunity in the construction of the curriculum, research priorities, teaching, supervision, and academic appointments and promotions. Women undergraduates still cluster in the few courses which illuminate their experience, while other courses continue to treat male experience as normative and ignore feminist challenges to the old androcentric paradigms. Women must demand a curriculum which is more relevant to our needs and which presents a less biased view of the world. Attrition rates for women entering fourth year and postgraduate courses is high, reflecting lack of encouragement and ensuing low esteem, and the conflicting demands made on women. Attrition rates for women PhD graduates are also very high - the academic world has little room for uppity women who challenge the basis of existing knowledge.

The Sex Discrimination Commissioner, Pam O'Neil, will be addressing a meeting of the Association of Women Employees on Monday 8 October in the Coombs Lecture Theatre at 12.30pm. She will be talking about the first two months' operation of the Sex Discrimination Act and how to use it. All women are welcome to attend.



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# Jobs for the GIRLS!

Eight years ago, a report was published called "The Role of Women in the Australian National University". It was more familiarly known as the Bramley-Ward Report, after its authors Gwenda Bramley and Marion Ward. It may have generated some change but lost momentum, there being no group of interested persons powerful enough to overcome the determination of the administration to maintain the status quo.

By 1983 however, the world had changed enough even to attract attention of senior academics and university bureaucrats. The impending Anti-Sexism legislation of the Labor Government was both a cause and a result of a political climate in which institutionalized discrimination, such as that found at ANU, was regarded as a poor show. Accordingly, Dr Marion Sawyer, from the Political Science Department, was appointed to a consultancy with the University, charged with preparing a report from the Vice-Chancellor which would review current employment practices and make recommendations for an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) program.

Dr Sawyer found that

43.5% of the University's employees were female (1 Dec. 1983), but that they were mostly 'support' rather than academic staff.

	Distribution of ANU Workforce	
	All Employees	Women Employees
Academic	30.7	6.5
General	69.3	93.5
	100.0	100.0

\* that "women are . . . more likely than their male colleagues to be employed on a part-time or casual basis and less likely to have the security of continuing opportunities. Women are generally absent from the decision-making bodies of the University and do not have a voice in decisions affecting their employment".

Dr Sawyer lists a phenomenon known as 'homosocial reproduction' as a contributing factor to systemic discrimination.

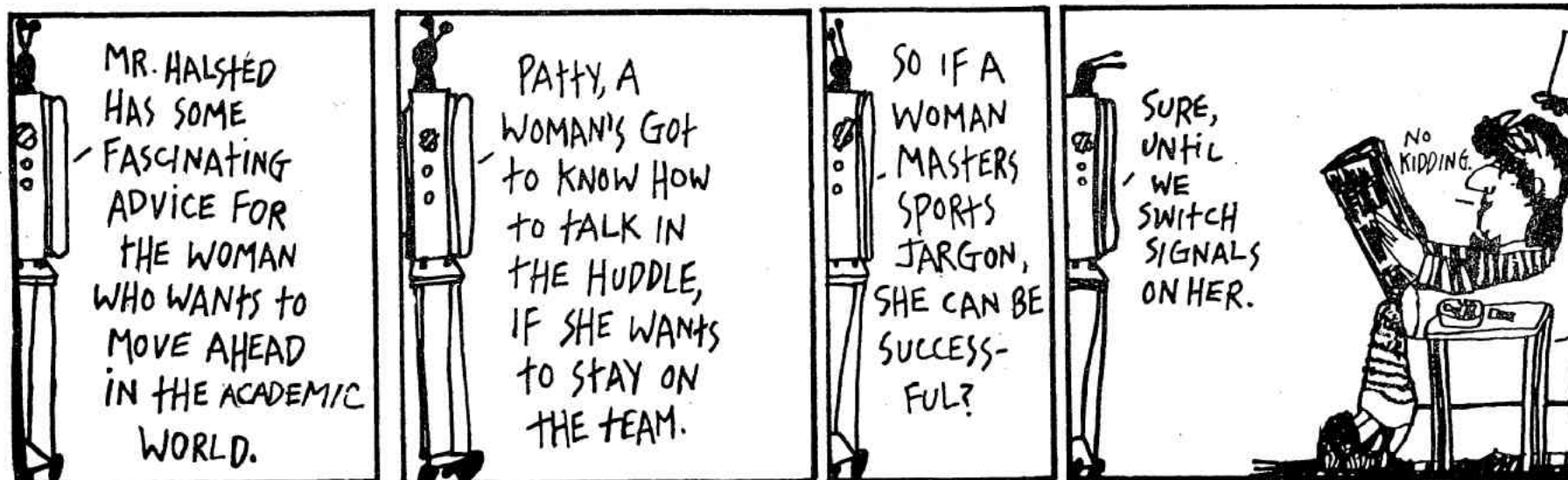
There is an extensive body of organisational literature documenting the process known as 'homosocial reproduction' (e.g. Kanter, 1977; Alvarez and Lutterman, 1979; Burton, 1983).

Homosocial reproduction, or recruitment in one's own image, is a fact of organisational life. Individuals may fulfil the formal criteria for a position, but be excluded because they do not share the social characteristics of those within the organisation. It is this sharing of characteristics, or social similarity, which facilitates mutual recognition and trust. Trust includes mutual understanding, the sharing of values and predictability of response. To select on the basis of social homogeneity means to prefer social certainty over the strains of dealing with people who are different and whose responses cannot be predicted (Kanter, 1977: 47-68).

The more senior the position within the organisation the more important are informal or intangible criteria. Senior members of the organisation will tend to groom their likely successors and select those with whom they communicate easily, whose behaviour is predictable to them, and who can be relied upon to share the values of top management (Kanter, 1977: 59-68; Deacon, 1983: 176). Kanter found that women within organisations were placed in the category of the incomprehensible and unpredictable. Men were uncertain how to deal with women and found that communicating with them took more time and that they were difficult to understand (cf 4.7).

It is difficult to know where to start combatting such a system. When the University was presented with Dr Sawyer's report in March 1984, it received not only statistical proof of its inadequate performance and not only a lucid and fascinating exposition of the problem but also 82 recommendations which combined to form a comprehensive base from which to begin the eradication process. These recommendations dealt with an EEO Policy Statement, an EEO Officer and committee, fractional full-time appointments, Staff Training and Development, Maternity and other Leave, Childcare, Promotion, Research staff, Clerical and Keyboard staff, Duty Statements, Classification Procedures, Job Rotation, non-traditional occupations, Cleaning Staff, Employment of Aborigines, Representation of Women on decision-making bodies, Sexual Harassment, Curriculum and sexist language.

At its April meeting, the University Council launched the complex business of referral to committee for advice and recommendation, despatching recommendations to far-flung corners of the campus. Departments, Faculties and the Boards (of the Faculties and of the Institute), Staff associations, university officers and students all considered the matter, debated it and passed it back. The process was 'concluded' in August when most matters passed through Council for the last time. Though many recommendations were watered down and a few were rejected, most of those supporting the introduction of EEO were pleased at the outcome. The University has agreed to be one of three post-school institutions participating in the Government's EEO pilot program. It has agreed to employ an EEO Officer and to implement a wide range of procedures which will improve opportunities for all women employees. This pleasure however is tempered by a recognition that what has been already a long and arduous struggle is only beginning. Eager as ANU heavies have been to accommodate themselves to pressure from the Labor Government, any steps further forward will have to be wrung like blood from a stone.



\* In November 1983 there were only three women among the 253 top salary earners.

\* that only 2.17% of female academics in the Institute of Advanced Studies were female.

\* and that only 2.7% of professors, 9.7% of associate professors/readers, 8.4% of senior lecturers and 24.7% of lecturers were female.

In these regards, clear indications of systemic discrimination, the ANU performs badly, even by Australian standards. Such discrimination, even when the net effect can be shown is often difficult to pinpoint. Peter Wilenski described it in 1977 as

"Discrimination . . . is not always a matter of individual bigotry or conscious intent. Nor is it always overt. Prejudices may, especially if they remain unchallenged, be incorporated in rules, standard procedures and criteria of eligibility, both written and unwritten. They thus become institutionalized; their origins in time obscured or forgotten. The rules and procedures may outlive the attitudes which produced them but continue to be widely accepted so long as they are applied impartially and universally. This appearance of impartiality or neutrality may obscure the fact that they affect members of different groups differently, offering advantage to some and handicapping others.

These rules and practices, sanctioned by custom and familiarity, are frequently not recognized as discriminatory by those who perpetuate them or by those affected. This form of discrimination is referred to as systemic in indirect.

It is a form of discrimination not easily proven and cannot be readily identified by scrutiny of individual cases. Its existence is revealed in statistical data. It is reflected for example, in differential patterns in employment between men and women and characterized by rules or criteria for recruitment, selection or promotion, which are not directly related to the requirements of the job.

The tendency to homosocial reproduction supports the status quo and disadvantages women and other groups who are discernibly different from the dominant group within the organisation, and who may represent a challenge to the values of the dominant group. As one of the respondents to the Bramley-Ward survey remarked:

Any non-conformity is clearly out, and to be a woman is automatically not to conform. (Bramley and Ward, 1976:46)

Mutual recognition based on social similarity is reinforced through the operation of informal networking. Mutual recognition and networking are important ingredients in the concepts of 'merit' or 'academic standing'. These concepts, which are frequently reified as absolute standards are in fact social constructs which derive from relatively closed networks. Nonetheless the concepts of merit, academic standing or reputation are frequently clung to with great conviction. In one such case at an Australian university a male had been appointed over a female on the grounds of international standing. On subsequent investigation it was found that the female concerned was cited three times as frequently as the male in international refereed journals. Those involved were convinced that the decision had been on the basis of 'merit'.

The belief that women are less meritorious than men relates to the whole process of socialisation. Studies of schools and colleges have shown that both boys and girls and their teachers regard boys as brighter and more worthy of attention, regardless of objective evidence. The same piece of work will be assessed as impressive if male authorship is assumed, mediocre if female authorship is assumed (Goldberg, 1976). In a survey of women academics at the ANU conducted in December 1983, 37.7 per cent of respondents indicated their belief that they had not been given the same encouragement as male students to pursue post-graduate studies and that this situation still held true for women students in their schools or faculties (see AWE Working Party Report, Table 4.1).

This is particularly the case if gains are to be consolidated in the academic sphere, where there is still an enormous reluctance to 'interfere' (Objective selection criteria, for example, is an industrial right available to general staff but strangely considered not applicable to academics.) Those recommendations which fared worst generally foundered on the rock of 'academic autonomy'.

Fortunately the Sawyer Report has an ally sorely missed by Bramley-Ward: the Association of Women Employees. Formed in late 1983, AWE's objectives include the following,

- (i) to promote the investigation, and elimination, of all forms of discrimination against women in the ANU;
- (ii) to seek provision of equal employment opportunity for women in the ANU;
- (iii) to monitor the implementation of equal employment opportunity initiatives in the ANU,
- (iv) to improve the status of women in the ANU; and
- (v) to promote the study and discussion of issues affecting women within the ANU.

AWE, as reported in the July edition of its journal, "AWE Inspired" "is keeping a watchful eye on the ways in which the recommendations in the Sawyer . . . Report [is] being discussed and implemented."

Female students, too, should perform such a task. We, too, suffer from systemic discrimination (see the next edition of Woroni). And all members of the University community should remember, in the words of Gwenda Bramley, that EEO is "a matter . . . beyond 'women only' . . . [but] a matter of justice for people, for an improved quality of life so that both men and women might become complete human beings".

Marian Sawyer's report, *Towards Equal Opportunity*, which includes the Report of the Working Party of the Association of Women Employees, is available at the Co-op Bookshop.

# ANU: EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Lesley Maxwell  
Senior Technical Officer, ANU

'Electron microscopy has so many interesting applications in hospitals and universities that it makes for an extremely interesting career. Although I have been in this field for a number of years, new dimensions are always opening up — making the job very stimulating. General introductory courses are available at Bruce TAFE.'

Kath Wellman  
Curator of Grounds, ANU

'Forestry was different, outdoors, and led to a profession, that's why I chose it. I revelled in it but was somewhat stifled by the necessity to live in isolated country towns.

Forestry led me to landscape architecture, a natural progression as both depended on a basic understanding of land management. Landscape architecture offered design, an integration of the arts and sciences. It also offered a degree of flexibility in employment. I have found it demanding, stressful but rewarding.

A bachelor's degree in landscape architecture is offered at CCAE.'

Sue Kennedy  
Trainee Technical Officer, ANU

'I find working in a technical position in mechanical engineering rewarding and satisfying. Although this area is traditionally male-dominated, there are many career opportunities for women. If school leavers have any interest in metal work, drafting, drawing, etc they should give serious consideration to what this field offers. My training includes design, drafting, fitting, machining and welding.'



# TOWARDS EQUALITY

Feminism and sexism are two words which held little meaning for me until my first year at Uni in 1982. During that year, however, I gradually realised how important the issue of sexism is, not only in talking about rape or job discrimination but all the time.

Allegations about socialization and the use of sexist terminology have gone, for me, from being hard to believe to blatantly obvious. It stands to reason, for instance, that if an unknown third person is always referred to as 'he', the (she/he/it) will automatically be pictured as a male — and why should that be the case? However, people will continue to use 'he' until someone comes up with an easy alternative. Blatant sexism should be obvious to anyone and offends a number of men as well as (hopefully) the majority of women — at least at Uni, where no-one has any excuse for ignorance. The big problem for some of us, though, is when to distinguish between being equal and being the same.

An example of this is the idea being introduced into South Australian primary schools to make females compete against and with males in sport, with the intention that it will eventually spread to secondary level as well. There are two ways of looking at this:

It is making the assumption that females are physically in no way inferior to males. Perhaps the result will be a new generation of women who, having always trained and competed with men in the same sports are truly equal.

It may, however, have the opposite effect. Traditionally women do not compete against men. They are generally

not as fast or strong. If pre-school age girls cannot be socialized into performing as well as their male counterparts in sporting activities they may be made to feel socially inferior by the new scheme. After a short time of facing constant defeat, females may fail to rise to the challenge altogether.

If the scheme is a failure it will only prove that males are on the whole physically stronger than women. And we all know that physical differences (handicaps, skin colour etc. included) don't count — or shouldn't anyway. But if women are irrevocably different from men, what other significance does this have? We have different hormones — we are usually clearly distinguishable and there are the obvious differences in the reproductive system. Surely whether men and women are equal or not (and we are equal, there is no doubt) it is inevitable that there are more than just physical differences? Or is the idea that we are progressing gradually from a state where we were quite different to one where we will actually be the same, i.e. one race of 'masculine' females or childbearing males??

Surely to have true equality it is not necessary to share everything — to have equivalent rather than identical roles. I believe that, drastic alternatives to socialization and education could cause a major change in the roles of men and women and who knows? perhaps this may affect us at a genetic level.

But why force us into the same role? While I desire equality in society in the sense that being a woman does not make me intellectually inferior, I do not regret being born a female and in many respects, I believe it's important to cherish the differences. Heather B.

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**WOMEN AND MATHS**

Despite the well-known male domination in the field of mathematics, there are some women who find the subject rewarding and interesting (?)(!). The ratio of women to men is low in the honours mathematics subjects — in fact it gets lower the further into a degree you venture. To share experiences and provide support, a group of women studying honours level mathematics have been occasionally meeting during the year. The head of the mathematics department approached some of the women studying honours maths to see if they had a solution to the low female participation in the courses. From this the group began and is essentially a place where women can find help and understanding about the subject, and support if they are finding it difficult to cope with any particular class.

Our aim is to keep women in mathematics, by cutting down on the number who drop out through feeling insecure, or that they "don't belong" in mathematics. We want to provide help and understanding about common experiences so people can see they aren't alone. If you, as a woman, are in a minority in a class, the isolation you feel can be the determining factor in whether you continue the course. This group aims to overcome this isolated feeling — so that whether a woman continues the course depends on whether she enjoys the work!

Though the group at present is only women in the honours maths program, we would like our next meeting to involve any women from any stream of mathematics. So if you feel like having a chat, and/or maths is getting you down, come along to the Reading Room, (through the Secretary's Office) in the Departmental Centre on the 5th October at 1pm. And bring your lunch!

# EDUCATION



SUSAN RYAN ADDRESS TO THE SUB-PRESS CLUB

**FEMINISM AND EDUCATION**

Regular attenders of the Sub-Press Club lunchtime meetings will no doubt have noticed the gradually increasing audience, including participants in the gallery; those enjoying the canned Knotholes meals, and the now sizable press-contingent, (complete with glaring lights and eager Woroni corp). They will also have noticed that flattering, (but oh so boring) remarks of the regular introduction. Amongst this gathering the Right Honourable Senator Susan Ryan was to appear on Tuesday 18 September to discuss, "Feminism and Education".

As it turned out, she did appear, smiling and enthusiastic, to assure us of her credentials as an ANU MA graduate, and to explain (as rapidly as possible in no more than 15 speech-writer minute words) how and why the Australian Labor Party since 1980 has attracted a large female vote, and will continue to do so. Credit should also be given to the intrepid interrogators, who plied Ryan with questions, (many of which also had small connection with "Feminism and Education") at the conclusion of the speech.

Ryan commenced by describing the pre-1980 female electorate as traditionally predominantly non-ALP voters. This she attributed to its masculine image and policies. Now, she believes the ALP to have equal appeal to men and women, and that there is a "close connection", between women's votes and the 1983 ALP victory. Ryan attributes this changed perception of the ALP by women to the growth of feminism, and a deliberate change of emphasis, accompanied by "hard work" within the ALP. Thus, many women who were first time voters and voted Labor, and others who changed their vote to the ALP did so in response to explicit policies. These included the discussion of the Affirmative Action Programme for women from 1981 and the announcement of a "Women's National Policy", in 1982.

According to Ryan, the ALP recognised the need to involve women in "the decision-making process", and she regards it as a considerable achievement to now have 13 ALP women in parliament (out of a total of 19 women parliamentarians).

Come the next election, Ryan assures us that, "women will vote on the ALP record," — that is, one of implementation of promises. These include the introduction of anti-sex discrimination legislation, the Affirmative Action Programme (of which the ANU is one of the pilot participants), and, "an on-going commitment" to greater access for women to higher education, training, and employment opportunities.

At the end of her speech, Ryan faced the inequities and problems that women still encounter. She noted that only ten percent of seats in parliament are held by women, and an even tinier percentage of official positions. "Women," she said, "are still segregated into female ghettos in the workforce," and that a larger percentage of the unemployed are women than men. She concluded with a glance into the crystal ball — and estimated that in the next ALP government, women would hold thirty seats (17 in the Senate, 13 in the House), a point which the ABC was quick to pick up on and report on that night's television news.

Ryan met question-time with a no doubt much practised cool. Questions touched on a variety of issues of significance, to students. They first drew Ryan's attention to the problems of college residences — in particular a funding cut from the end of 1986 which will affect 16,000 residents around Australia. In answer to the questions, "Are college residents an elite?" and "What will the cut-money be used for?" Ryan responded that poorer students cannot afford to stay in colleges, and that the money would be used in a scheme to benefit all students in their accommodation needs. This would take the form of an emergency loan fund, which any student could apply for. This would be a "fairer use" of the money available.

The second question concerned the provision of child-care on campus — which it was pointed out was essential for many women to be able to participate in university education. Ryan muttered about "new guidelines" appearing and that she believed there should be a combination of subsidized and non-subsidized places for children on campus; academic staff and tutors to pay for their children's places.

A question was asked about the Affirmative Action programme in which ANU is participating. Ryan responded that the ALP hopes to use the programme as a pilot for legislation to be drafted in a year's time. It is to be a trial period to discover the expectations of those involved, including employers. A further question on this topic asked had the pilot scheme met opposition? The answer was "yes", in the form of the "Queen Bee Syndrome" This is something that Leonie Kramer suffers from. Ryan noted that it afflicts women who have 'succeeded' in our society, and who then cannot see that there is 'a problem for those who don't break out of stereotypes.' She continued, "that it is coincidence and good luck that produces the Ryans of this world." Practical objections to the scheme have been received from administrators who cannot see how the scheme will work. Ryan's response to that is: "It shouldn't be beyond them to give opportunities to women, that they've been giving to men for centuries."

**TEAS OFFICE CHANGE OF ADDRESS**

Advice has been received that the ACT Office of the Department of Education and Youth Affairs which administers the Tertiary Education Assistance Scheme, will be moving from Woden in mid December 1984. The new office will be located at the 4th floor, Silverton Centre, on the corner of Rudd and Moore Streets in Civic.

The postal address will be  
The Director,  
ACT Office,  
Dept of Education and Youth Affairs  
PO Box 1573 CANBERRA ACT 2601

To the raising of a rumour of the re-introduction of tertiary fees, Ryan countered that despite the fact that the ALP had no intention of doing so, some people, like Max Walsh insist on talking about it. She believes that he has every right to do so, but that students should firmly rebut his suggestions.

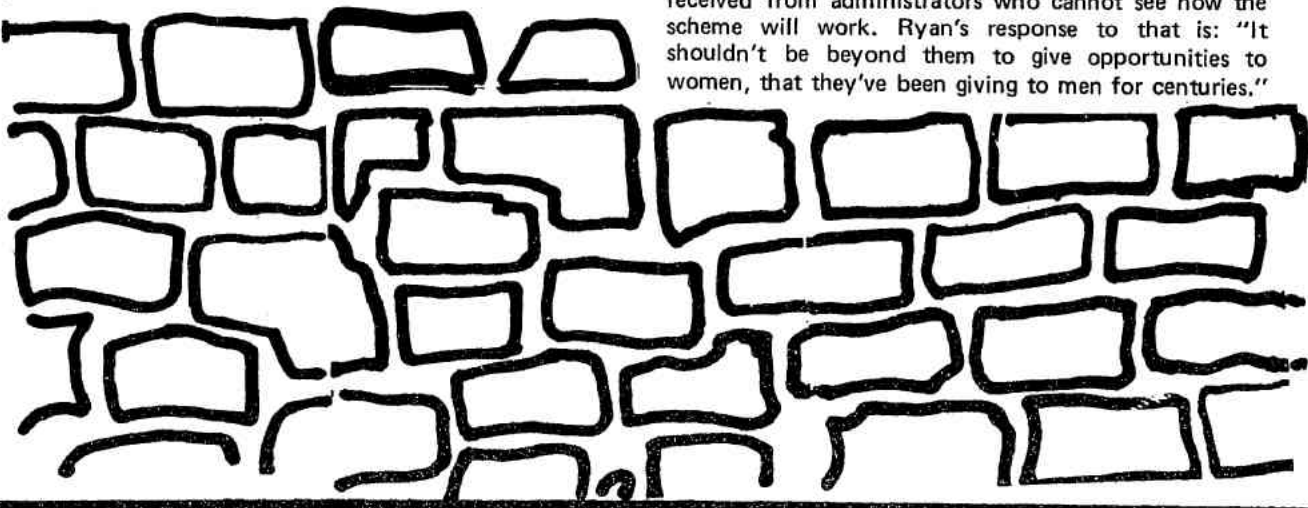
It was Dr Jim Cairns who raised the point that many Australians, "feel that the country would be a lot safer if we had nothing to do with uranium and US bases." Cairns asked, "Is there a choice between the parties?" Diplomatic as ever, Ryan answered this with a great deal of caution, saying that there was a "difference of approach" between the ALP and conservatives, in the weight given to views put forward, and the way questions are dealt with. "The ALP she sees as "pursuing disarmament and committed to peace." This is expressed in its policies disallowing unqualified uranium mining, and the ban on exports of uranium to France, whilst it continues nuclear testing in the Pacific. However, Ryan added that there is a "need to find more effective ways of pursuing the ALP objectives," and that the ALP, "welcomed critical views pushing them in the right direction."

A final question was fielded as to the relative emphasis given to needs of mature-age students vs. school leavers. Ryan answered that there was no emphasis but a policy to meet the "area of greatest need". That, she feels is now amongst school-leavers, due to the decline in their numbers entering higher education, and instead of joining the workforce transferring to unemployment. During the same period, Ryan said that there has been "a great rise in the participation of mature-age students."

Ryan's speech, and handling of questions showed that in intention, she is not a Queen Bee. She is presently one of Australia's most prominent politicians, a member of the Hawke Cabinet, and Minister for Education. She appears also to have gained this position with less emphasis on morning tea and cookery book electioneering than is the case for the Member for Canberra.

Yet Ryan demonstrated to the Sub-Press Club a pragmatic faith in reform as an avenue for the changes necessary in society before it will be possible for a significant number of women to share the status she enjoys. The Sub-Press Club should be applauded for finding interesting, even challenging speakers — and for providing a forum in which students and staff may join.

Miranda Korzy



# WHAT IS COLLEGE LIFE REALLY LIKE ?

"College Life", the expression conjures up many images for different people, yet for those who live in the ANU colleges it represents a lifestyle unique and distinct from that of families and many friends. With the constraints and rules of school behind you, college life presents totally new opportunities to experience life first hand.

This begins for most in "O-Week" which, with all the activities involved becomes a time of constant introductions, corridor parties, dances, bar nights, coffee evenings, picnics, meals lake cruises and alike all become ways to meet people and begin friendships, while old ones are renewed. Together, some grimace over their homesickness and their chances of survival when attempting to exist on TEAS, while others discover an environment of new freedom and independence away from family ties.

The colleges become multicultural communities within themselves as well as being home for not only full and part-time university students but CCAE students, PhD students, visiting fellows and conference delegates who, during the uni vacations swarm across the campus armed with folders and duly labelled with their name tags.

So much is heard and said about College food and many a mum has been duly promoted to Number One chef when the initial shock of cooking "a la masse" throws many students into perpetual day dreaming about the ultimate meal. When in doubt though there's always Dolly's or Gus's!

Life of course is not totally idyllic in college and as exam clouds loom and the workload increases, tension mounts and coffee and cigarette consumption reaches an all time high, with coffee (or chocolate if that's the case) being pumped into the system to keep weary eyes open and honed in on the textbooks before you. Through the haze (the aftermath of several packets of cigarettes) there is to be found a student, well, somewhere amongst the smoke, coffeecups, paper and textbooks there should be!

But it is at times, such as the end of term and Bushweek that the tension of work is forgotten and the uniqueness of student life is at its peak. Interhall rivalry is battled out during the Iron Man Event as well as the Scavenger Hunt when the students strip Canberra of all that is to be "scavenged", leaving this bastion of orderliness and civil organisation almost naked, and quaking in its boots.

College Life Rules O.K.!

ALO



## fun, films, & courses at C Y S S Q's Day

### COMMUNITY YOUTH SUPPORT SCHEME

This scheme is a government funded body, which provides activities/resources/space for young people not engaged in paid work. CYSS schemes are just another government response to high youth unemployment.

During the seven years of CYSS's operation it has become apparent that the scheme caters for the needs of young men, rather than young women.

One of the most glaring reasons for this imbalance is that men regard the public arena as their domain, whereas women not engaged in paid work, are relegated to the private sphere, and do not perceive themselves as 'unemployed' as they have other roles which regulate their lives - mother, childminder, house-keeper.

Subsequently in CYSS schemes, males have traditionally dominated the space. They articulate their demands loudly and more proscriptively than women, which results in the needs of young women not being considered.

Women tend to use CYSS centres



for a specific reason and then leave, whereas males tend to use the space as a 'drop in' centre. This serves to compound the males' territorial possessiveness about the centre.

The three CYSS centres in the ACT, Belconnen, Civic and Woden all suffer from the problems mentioned, and all are tackling them in their own way.

All CYSS centres are aware of the problems associated with establishing effective women's groups in CYSS.

So I do not intend to concentrate on the difficulties associated with this arena, but rather speak of the more successful efforts at bringing women to CYSS.

During the later half of 1984, Belconnen CYSS's women's group has had some interesting results. Monday is women's day at Belconnen CYSS, at which time the centre is closed to males who use the centre, in an effort to create space for women by positively discriminating for them.

So Monday has become a day in which women control the space. The schedule for the day is very flexible. Usually we watch films - concerning women's health, unemployment, sexual harassment, rape . . . then sit

around, chatting and indulging in women's tea parties. We intend to start a home maintenance course, a women's and computer course. .

The positive spinoff from women's days, is that women now regularly use the centre, so almost every day is effectively a women's day!

Belconnen CYSS also runs a women's self defence course - but that's now near completion. The scheme also organizes free childcare for women responsible for children.

The most important point from all this is that CYSS centres are to be used - They are a resource for people not engaged in paid work, so money for activities, equipment, materials or a space to talk. CYSS schemes are all these.

All three CYSS schemes in the ACT employ women project officers; and all wish to involve women in their activities.

So - a plea to all women - If you want to learn a new skill, watch a film - eat good food - do almost anything - visit a CYSS scheme.

Louise at Belconnen CYSS 51 2852  
The Foundry, Civic 47 5815  
Woden CYSS 81 1702

# LAW & SCIENCE CLASH OVER LUNCH

\*\*\*\*\* DR ERIC MAGNUSSON AT THE ANU SUB-PRESS CLUB \*\*\*\*\*

After such illustrious and eloquent speakers as David Coombe, Al Grassby and Jim Cairns, the ANU Sub-Press Club entertained us over lunch on Tuesday 21 August with the closer to home talents of Dr Eric Magnusson, a Fellow of our very own Research School of Chemistry.

Dr Magnusson spoke on the presentation of scientific evidence in criminal trials, or more correctly, the question of the capacity of our legal system, based as it is upon a method of verdict by a jury comprised of men and women who are unlikely to have any scientific training, to deal with evidence of a scientific nature. With the release last month of Edward Splatt and the continued publicity involving the Chamberlain trial, this has become an issue of contention which has recently received much publicity.

As Dr Magnusson reminded us, Splatt had served six years of a sentence for the murder of a 78 year old pensioner when a Royal Commission overturned the conviction earlier this year and declared him innocent of the crime. The evidence by which he had been convicted was circumstantial, revolving primarily around the discovery of paint dust found

on his clothes which was said to match that on a window of the victim's house, yet like the much publicized blood discovered under the dashboard of the Chamberlain car twelve months after the disappearance of Azaria, it was evidence which a jury found sufficiently convincing to decide on a verdict of guilt.

Dr Magnusson saw the danger of presenting a jury with scientific evidence as what he described as the influence of the 'hallowed word of the expert', whereby scientific technicians present evidence to a court, which will be accepted without question by a jury because they are speaking on a subject on which they are reputedly experts and the jury will likely have no knowledge at all. But, in fact scientific evidence can be only circumstantial in that it is usually of a type which would incriminate any number of people standing in the defendant's place. A sample of semen or blood collected from the victim of a rape, for example may show that the attacker was of a matching semen or blood type with the man being tried, but it will not be unique to him alone. Such evidence can only support the prosecution case, therefore, but it is often taken to have proved it.

Defence against scientific evidence is

difficult, chiefly because forensic tests are carried out under police (and therefore prosecution) authority to which the defence has no access. Dr Magnusson said that, even though questionable methods may be employed in such tests, they are often destroyed after a report has been made for the prosecution case, so it becomes impossible to check the results. This was so with the tests of the Chamberlain dashboard blood, for example, which the prosecution report presented in the trial said had shown that the blood was of human foetal origin. Yet it has since become apparent that the tests did not conclusively prove that the blood could not have been that of a human adult or even of a sheep.

There is also the danger, according to Dr Magnusson, particularly when the defence presents 'experts' of their own to dispute the claims of those of the prosecution that scientific evidence may become so highly technical that the jury may not understand what is being said at all, as some of the jurors responsible for the Splatt conviction now admit was in fact so in that case. This being so, surely the efficiency of our trial-by-jury system, when faced with scientific evidence is extremely questionable. Dr Magnusson,

on the subject, said something about comparison with legal methods employed in the good old days, and also of a highly scientific nature, such as trial by water. As he pointed out, somewhere between now and then, someone must have instigated reform because they thought that there must be a better way of doing things.

The ANU Sub-Press Club meets periodically on Tuesdays at 12 noon in Knotholes Bar. \$5 will get you in as a student to a two-course repast of usually quite reasonable food followed by coffee. If you really are a bona fide poverty ridden student and you feel that you can't afford to blow your meagre pennies on such an extravagance as food (or if mixing it with politics always gives you indigestion), but you still want to be in for the entertainment, gallery seats are available for \$2.

Lunch is usually served around 12.30 with the speaker doing his, or her, bit including question time, from one o'clock to about two.

Rozalyn Daniell

## LOOKING BACK : WORONI and the SRC a generation ago

A couple of nights ago, I was leafing through a box of sheet music finding such things as the Canberra-composed Musical 'The Sentimental Bloke', a song called 'Swing Me Higher, Obadiah' and a hand copied version of 'Daddy' signed by my grandmother and dated 16 July, 1897.

Then I found pages 3 and 4 of an edition of 'Woroni' dated somewhere between 18.5.57 and 12.6.57.

I wonder whether this single sheet of Gestetnered yellowing foolscap is the only one still left in existence? I wonder whether it deserves to survive another 27 years.

The sheet contains four letters to the editor and two advertisements. The Ads are for a moot to be held by the Canberra University Law Society on June 23 at 7.30 in the Law Library and for a General Meeting of the Canberra University College Students' Association for June 12 at 8.30. No indication is given as to the subject of the moot (although I do recall one when a corporation was charged with murder) or the matters to be considered at the General Meeting.

Some indication of the types of motion likely to be discussed can be gained from the longest letter on my sheet. It is signed 'Fiori' (a name that may still be familiar to law students) and says in essence that the Students Association should not have wasted its time at the 1957 AGM considering a motion which condemned an aspect of African apartheid, but should instead 'concentrate on finding remedies for genuine student grievances and on implementing constructive student suggestions'.

A brief reply by Chris Masterman disagreed and a letter from Alan Landgren asserted that an AGM is not the place for a student to parade their achievements and 'indulge one's narcissus complex'. For the life of me I cannot recall the occasion to which this referred.

The fourth letter, signed 'Servus Publicus' protested against the Psychology



The SRC in 1956 or 1957: (from left to right): Tim Ellis, Wendy Cromer (now Benson), John Robinson, ?, John Carroll, Joan Thomson (now Pratt), Ric Mason.

Department researching the attitudes of Public Servants to the Public Service. As well as reflecting the fact that 99.9 percent of students in 1957 were in the Public Service, this letter alleges that Public Servants do not possess attitudes and that the results of psychology experiments should be kept secret.

Well, there you have it. I feel a little sad that such a momentous find should have so little material of lasting worth recorded or have similar things been said lately, I wonder? I did hunt for any more remaining sheets of 'Woroni' but found none. I know I would have had them at one stage because I was a full-time student at the Canberra University College at a time when it fitted into less than the whole of the Turner Migrant Hostel. At various stages of my career, I was Secretary and Vice-President of the SRC and also a kind of Assist-

ant Editor of 'Woroni'. The latter post meant that you wrote a bit, typed a bit and drew a few squiggles on stencils to decorate the spaces. Then you carried the stencils and the SRC's paper over the machine in the Pol Sci Dept and ran off 300 or so copies. (If you were very clever you did not jam a sheet in the sticky black machine for the staff to fix in the morning) then of course you were involved with assembly and distribution. I might add that none of us were paid for our efforts - how 'Woroni' has improved.

The uni in our day was, I think, quiet and conservative. The student body was small and comprised mostly of part-timers with little time for student politics or interest in radical ideas. But we weren't dull and we weren't lacking in academic challenges and mental stimulation. The staff included some very famous names.

E.g. Manning Clark, A.D. Hope, Leonie Kramer, Fin Crisp and John Fleming to name a few. You didn't take your studies lightly when you worked with people of their calibre.

During my years at the uni a number of changes took place. The ANU was founded as a post-graduate institution and it slowly became apparent that the C.U.C. would have to join it as its undergraduate wing. We called it a shot-gun wedding and worried that we would be swamped by the heavies in the research schools. Also Canberra was growing and more students were prepared to stay in Canberra for their university education. The growth in the full-time body which resulted was of great benefit to campus life.

There was no student representative on Council but the Principal, Professor Burton and Secretary Mr Theo Keith would receive deputations. On occasion the Council would ask for student views on various matters. Of course the student and staff Common Rooms were only separated by a third room in which we all had our morning and afternoon tea and played table tennis, so there was a degree of fraternisation.

In the Law School, the students conducted a study of subjects taught and teaching methods in all Australian and N.Z. universities and made, we thought, a real contribution to the development of the school. Even today the ANU Law School is very highly regarded.

Well, it's all a long time ago and I have enjoyed reminiscing. There's another generation of students in charge now and I wonder how many people reading this will remember the names and events I have mentioned. Anyone else with 1957 editions of 'Woroni' to exchange can contact the writer through the present editor.

Joan Thomson Pratt

# WOMEN

&

# HISTORY ?

? ? ? ? ?  
 'THE HAPPIEST WOMEN (LIKE THE HAPPIEST NATIONS)  
 HAVE NO HISTORY'  
 GEORGE ELIOT  
 ? ? ? ? ?

THE FUTURE IS  
 FEMALE



## A PLEA FOR WOMEN'S HISTORY

"... every socialist recognises the exploitation of the workman by the capitalist and cannot understand that others, and especially the capitalists themselves fail to recognise it also; but the same socialist often does not recognise the exploitation of women by men because the question touches his own dear self more or less nearly."

A. Bebel. *Women in the Past, Present and Future*

The subject of this article, long resting at the back of my mind, was finally prompted by a conversation with a (male) socialist friend, over an ostensibly innocuous cup of coffee in the Refectory a few days ago. We got into a heated argument about the nature of the "revolution" (if and when it ever eventuates) and the much debated issue (among feminists at least) of the role of feminism within that revolution. Our argument primarily concerned the question whether there must be a separate feminist revolution, aligned with, but autonomous of, and NOT subsumed under the socialist "workers' revolution", or whether our task, as women, would be to play the role in which we have always been cast previously—knitting socks and making Red Cross parcels for the 'real revolutionaries'—on the sidelines of revolutions, and of history. I personally believe that our (women's) interests are most closely represented by the former view. A brief look at women's place in previous historical analyses will serve as a warning, and an illustration of the danger of letting the 'menfolk' run the revolutions, and write the histories.

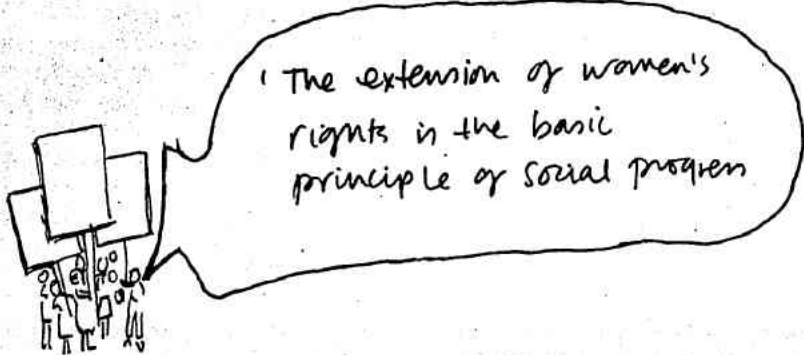
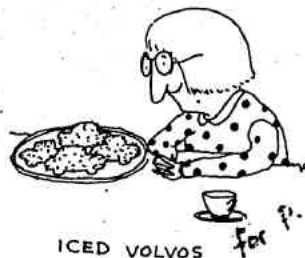
While class, as a social construct and a tool of historical analysis, is obvious to, and accepted by most historians, gender is all too often ignored—considered 'natural', gender differentiation is disregarded as transhistorical and therefore not worthy of analysis. However, gender (as opposed to sex, which is a biological difference between female and male according to their reproductive capacities) is a social, and not a 'natural' division. As a social construct it is the means by which men (the dominant gender) oppress women. The relationship between the two sexes has a place in the historical process akin to class struggle. The plea of Natalie Zemon Davis, that gender become second nature to the historians, as class is now, is one that cannot be too often repeated.

Previous histories (socialist ones included), because of this deficiency in historical analysis, have fallen short of their purpose—that is, to study periods of upheaval and/or social change with a view to the progress of humanity (rather than *mankind*). Activities and social changes previously considered worthy of historical study, are largely defined by men and, in the main, concern only men. Women are notable only for their absences. Women's participation is apparently negligible, not worthy of note; or worse, assumed to be the same as men. Those women do make the pages of history books are exceptions who prove the rule.

If you doubt the truth of this pick up any history book—it will include a token paragraph on women (if you're lucky), or it will blithely assume that historical happenings affected women in the same way as men (the use of the term 'man' to embrace both sexes is a key factor in constructing the invisibility of women) but this is not the case. Traditional periods of progress for mankind seem to be, as a general rule, regressive for one half of the population who, whether connected to the oppressed or oppressing classes, are *all* oppressed as a gender (though the nature of oppression differs according to class placement). Joan Kelly-Gadol's essay, "Did Women Have A Renaissance?" (in Bridenthal and Koonz, *Becoming Visible*) might provoke not only thought, but a reinterpretation of such a 'progressive' period in history.



ETHNIC CUISINE: SWEDEN



My point is that, as historians, it is simply not good enough to take traditionally accepted periods of history, such as the French Revolution, the industrial revolution, or the Russian Revolution, and study them as merely motivated by the dynamic of class struggle. Gender struggle too is a motive force in history. It is the historian's task to discover how this force works, why the oppression of women takes place in contemporary, and previous societies, and how women have been fighting back. Unless this is done, it is not correct to call yourself an historian of humanity (though possible of *mankind*). What may be necessary is a re-periodisation of history, a rejection (or certainly, at least a reassessment) of traditional periods of historical study, and an adoption of new ones. For example, it may be as valid to study the effects of the introduction of the Pill onto the popular market, as it has been to study the abovementioned revolutions. Women, in the home and family and in the workforce, do NOT form a static backdrop to the 'real' happenings of history—they were actors in it too, though sometimes in different ways from men: and the family (typically a woman's primary place of activity) is not an unchanging, 'natural' (and thus unhistorical) structure; it is one means by which women have been (and still are) oppressed, and is susceptible to social change, as is any institution within society that upholds the existing system of power.

Diane Hamer

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# LIBRARY NEWS



- Results of student questionnaire
- Collection Rationalization
- Access and Loans
- New Library Computer

Thanks to all those who filled in library questionnaires. We analysed and collated the results, and they were considered at the last Library Committee meeting. We will continue to press for the changes suggested by the questionnaire results. Students were less concerned with the rationalization than with conditions and facilities in the library buildings.

Students suggested:

- better lighting between libraries and to car parks
- coffee rooms at Crawford and Menzies
- after hours return slot at Menzies
- more staff for short loan in peak periods
- better organization of the catalogues
- improvements to air-conditioning/heating systems
- correction of flickering lights in Chifley

The most popular suggests for location of material were:

- to keep QA material in Crawford
- to have all Political Science books in Chifley

Other proposals were to catalogue the Bliss material (as a CEP project), and to vary library hours in the long vacation - some early opening times, some late closing times.

The rest of the University seems to be reasonably well satisfied with the rationalization proposals. Some areas of disagreement remain - especially the Economics material in HB-HE. The Library Committee has asked the Vice-Chancellor to hold a meeting with Economics staff from the faculties and the Institute to resolve this - so lobby your lecturers if you care whether HB-HE goes to Chifley or Menzies.

A Library Info sheet with the final proposals for location of material has been distributed. If you have any more comments or suggestions please let us know (at SA Office) by 1 November at the latest.

The books and journals will probably be moved in one huge operation over the long vacation. There will be minimal services available to Library users during December and January - so if you want books over the summer take them out in November. The whole move should be finished by February, in time for next year's honours students to start work.

There is not much space left in the main library buildings - they will be full in three years. The Library will cope with this by putting more books and journals into compactus storage - both

in the main buildings, with the same access as to ordinary shelving, and in the A.D. Hope store. It is also possible (though unlikely) that the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission will fund an extension to the Menzies Building.

At the next Library Committee meeting we will consider the access and loans regulations which operate in the different library buildings. Is it true that Crawford promptly chases up overdue books while other buildings let you get away with it for months? Should all borrowers have identical borrowing rights? Should periodicals be kept always in the libraries for reference? Let us know what you think.

Finally, the library is installing its own whizzbang computer system. Eventually there will be no more card catalogues - just terminals. No more filling in cards to borrow books - just waving the book and your student card in front of a machine. No more getting away with overdue books - recall notices automatically issued and sent out. At the last LC meeting we were given a chance to investigate the new system. We were able to search a test catalogue for authors, book titles, single keywords, combinations of words, classification number, subject, etc. It could turn out to be a very convenient and efficient system, although it will be a few years before it is all up and running.

Lesley Ward  
SA Office 49 2444  
Home: 51 3091

## What are the WOMEN'S Archives ?

Women's Archives consists of a collective of women working to help keep women's past alive and thriving. We've been collecting material, holding exhibitions, helping to recreate history for the last two years. Our collective is open to all women who want to preserve the history of all women's lives. We are based near the Women's Studies Department in the Haydon Allen Building and welcome all visitors, browsers and of course researchers!

At the moment all the work is voluntary but we hope to be finding funding soon. We are putting out a quarterly newsletter, collecting all the material that continues to come in (we have had a great response from all over Australia) and generally acting as a resource for women working on women's past lives.

Most importantly we are trying to break down the notion of archives as boring dusty places which nobody uses. We want the archives to be used as a resource and holding place for those women making history now - and that means all of us. We also want to help women feel that their lives and history are important and necessary and worth recording. So that means we collect anything and everything to do with

women - a unique function amongst archives in Australia. It also means that the collection is accessible - we have tried to make it more so by exhibitions and as much publicity as our small group of workers allows. Associated with the archives is a women's directory which is helping to keep women working in different fields in touch with each other. We are also making connections with other feminist orientated archives at conferences and through our newsletter.

Our collection is small but growing. We have manuscripts, newspaper clippings, badges, posters, old ephemera, books, private papers, women's journals . . . as many things as we can find which make women's history. So if you have anything to contribute from embroidery and shopping lists to diaries and Women's Weeklies and of course some of your precious time, please come in and see us. We are open most days from 9.30 - 4.30 (often later), and for the enthusiastic amongst you our next collective meeting is at 5.30 October 8th at the Women's Archives, 2nd floor of the Haydon-Allen Building.

Wendy Harcourt  
on behalf of the  
Women's Archives Collective,  
tel. 2716



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# RECLAIMING

Women have been marching in Reclaim the Night Marches for many years. These marches have occurred in Italy, Greece and many other countries, as well as in Australia. Reclaiming the Night is not a minority issue: it is an issue which affects and concerns all women. So, by joining this march we are part of a world wide movement to Reclaim the Night.

These marches do not happen spontaneously. Rather they occur as women's growing awareness of their oppression is channelled into action. None of the gains that have been made by the Women's Movement have been given freely. They have been brought into existence because of women's struggles, and we women have had to fight in order to change our place in society.

Our oppression as women in a male dominated society will not be removed by legislation, green papers and equal employment opportunities alone. The only way our position will ultimately change is by women constantly joining together in actions to assert our strength.

We are walking together tonight; but in the present social context it is not possible for women to walk alone with safety. This march is a group occasion where women demand the rights of the individual woman to be free of sexual oppression.

Women's image in pornography, and in the mass media is that of being accessible and available. This leads to men being able to consider all women as available and accessible to them. So, when a woman walks alone she is usually given no choice about the conversations and interactions with men that are forced on her.

A woman walking alone may not always be consciously frightened that she may be raped or assaulted. More often she is unwilling to face the sexual harassment which attacks her dignity and self-image. Wolf-whistles and propositions are seemingly complimentary, but they indicate that the man involved has made a choice of that woman. This is an imposition which leaves her powerless to make her own choice and decision about her own sexuality.

A man is always considered to have a purpose when he is alone. A woman alone is seen to be vulnerable, and to be seeking company, sometimes indiscriminately. A woman is not seen to be capable of being alone — she is always seen in relation to other people — a spouse, a friend, a child. More than this, a woman is always encouraged to see herself in relation to other people, and to constantly adjust and improve the image of herself that is being projected towards other people.



In early June a group of Canberra women got together to discuss organising a Reclaim the Night March. About 30 women attended the first meeting, but this number narrowed down to an organising collective of eight women, the majority of whom are members of Women on Campus. The aims and beliefs of the organising collective are explained in the speech we gave at the march, which is printed here. In this article I would like to write about the actual process of organising such a march.

One of the most satisfying things about organising the Reclaim the Night March as far as I was concerned, was the collective itself. Collectives are often accused of being inefficient, and it must be admitted that occasionally a lack of hierarchy, or of a recognised chairperson led to some confusion at meetings. On the whole, however the Reclaim the Night group was a glowing example of the benefits of collective organisation. Responsibilities for posters, publicity etc. was distributed in such a way that the burden was not placed on any particular person all the time. The various skills of the collective members were utilised — some women were better at organising and "getting things done", others were better at coming up with bright ideas. Because some meetings were attended by only two or three women, some decisions had to be made without consulting the others, but these

decisions were discussed at later meetings, and changed if necessary. All decisions were made by "talking through" disagreements until we all agreed on a course of action.

We gave press releases to all the media organisations Canberra and got reasonably good publicity. The Canberra Times sent a couple of reporters to cover the march, and they showed admirable stoicism in listening to our speeches in Civic crouched under their umbrellas.

Fund-raising is inevitably a headache. The Reclaim the Night March used funds donated by Women Against Rape and Women on Campus. We had a fund-raising party at "Tilly's" which was fun, and financially successful.

The collective made the decision that we would write our own speech and that members of the collective would read that speech on the night. The idea of having a well-known speaker was rejected. Our reason for not wanting a "star" was that we wanted to demonstrate the fact that "ordinary" women have the ability to write, and to speak in public about issues that concern them. Four women each read a part of the speech and despite the inevitable failure of the PA system, we felt that the speech was the best part of the march. It enabled us to explain clearly many of the constraints that we saw as being placed on us by our inability to walk safely alone at night.



# THE NIGHT

*Part of the focus of Reclaim the Night is to show a woman alone to be a positive and powerful image, to change the social view of women to this positive image, and to allow women to be alone.*

*Elements of the oppression of women can be found in all parts of our lives; at work and socially we suffer from sexual harassment; we still receive lower pay than men and are discriminated against because of our sex; we still demand the right to safe contraception and free, safe abortion for every woman. In addition, the community still has to be made aware of the special limits that operate to restrict women's freedom.*

*The most obvious and dangerous limit imposed on us is the fear of rape. Both men and women's lives are curtailed and defined by general social violence such as assaults and muggings, but women must endure a further, specific restraint — the fear of rape. This prevents us from taking a full and active role in society.*

*Inadequate lighting, or areas hidden by bushes cannot be held solely responsible for the occurrence of rape. Rape is not cause only by situation. It is not only motivated by sexual desire. Rape is the visible, violent manifestation of the power struggles between men and women. It occurs in all areas of society — within families, in well-lit homes, at public events. Women are potential rape victims in almost any social situation.*

*Women no longer see themselves as helpless victims. We are now working in many ways to restructure society and ideas about men and women, and the power between them. Women need to assert our strength, both collectively and individually, and the best way to begin this process is to become aware. Being aware is power in itself; trying to change things is evidence of that power. It is a powerful and positive thing when women become aware of the restrictions placed on them, and of their power to challenge and change society.*

*This march is a part of that breakout. This march is an active retaliation. We are not just responding to a situation — we are taking our right to our own space. We won't live our lives in a cage. We reclaim our right to walk alone at night as a vital symbol of women's true emancipation.*

On the night of the 27th July our miserable group assembled in the Women's House at O'Connor, to contemplate the rain. The downpour was certainly no sprinkling shower, but a really cold hard driving rain. We were momentarily encouraged by a woman calling in to ask us if the march was still on, and promising that she'd be there. We sent out messages via all the radio stations to announce the march was still on. After a pizza and a couple of bottles of cider we sallied forth to the Family Law Courts. As we huddled, bedraggled on the steps, it seemed fairly unlikely that anyone would venture out, let alone enough women to constitute a march. But, out of the murky gloom, swathed in umbrellas, raincoats and other assorted wet-weather gear, emerged small groups of women. We greeted them enthusiastically, handing out sparklers and it soon became clear that we had a march of considerable proportions. So, off we marched, accompanied by a posse of policemen who obviously thought we were deranged, being out on such a night.

And it was a successful march — not to mention noisy, as two hundred or so women sang and shouted their way into Civic. The bystanders looked pretty amazed, but accepted our pamphlets with equanimity, apart from one charming young woman who refused a pamphlet and told me that she "was proud to be a

woman", obviously implying that I wasn't! After the speech in Petrie Plaza most of the women marched back to the Law Courts. This was unplanned, and confused the police who blocked off roads, only to discover that the leaders of the march had headed off down others. From the Law Courts we went back to the Women's House for hot chocolate, champagne and port to celebrate the unexpected (in view of the weather) success of the evening.

Of course with every event of this type, there were things that we felt we could have done better. We felt that the inclusion of foreign languages on the poster was a type of "tokenism", but we still moved to have them there as some kind of recognition of the fact that there are so many women in Australia who do not speak English. We experienced frustration during the organisation of the march because some women, not in the collective, had volunteered to do certain things and then proved unreliable. We felt a commitment to childcare was important and the childcare was used by women taking part in the march. But our worst problem had been the weather — we felt we would have had double the numbers if the night had been fine — and it was decided that, in future, every attempt should be made to hold Reclaim the Night Marches in summer!

Jane Elix

Reclaim the Night Collective



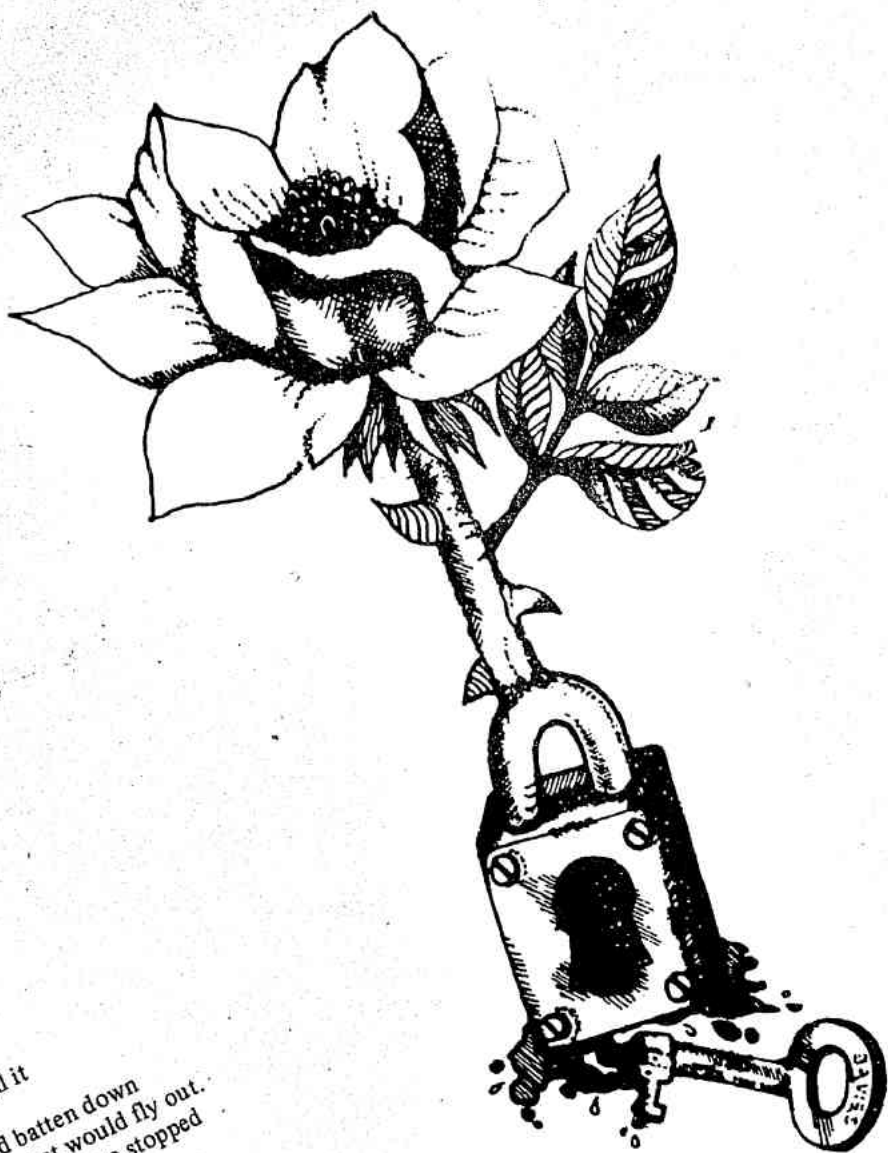
# WOMEN

*masturbation*

She flung down her body  
 And lay naked  
 Fingers splayed, arms reaching  
 The darkness penetrating  
 Like the beating heart that  
 Tears open her silence and  
 Touches her body.  
 The ache and thuds, then emptiness  
 The sweat clings to her hair and face  
 Sweet on the body and  
 Legs spread wide  
 Pressed and straining tight  
 She creates a world that  
 No one can disturb  
 Where no one is needed  
 No body used  
 Where no heart is bled  
 And no feelings bruised.

I bent down and kissed  
 Her lips  
 Soft and sweet  
 And then lay beside her  
 In a gentleness that makes  
 Me trouble

And my body ache,  
 Alive to the touch  
 We embrace.



## WRITE

*the anchor*

Looking out across the cove  
 Rolling waves on tumbled cracked  
 And slated stone  
 The lighthouse white washed and salt licked  
 And yachts tacking hard to and fro  
 The Gap they called it  
 The salvaged rusted anchor dragged up  
 Fifty years after the ship went down  
 Sails torn  
 Plunging and bucking and then opening  
 Her belly against the rocks  
 One survivor and then the anchor they  
 Dragged up from the ocean floor  
 The Gap it's called  
 But now no sail ships flying out  
 Before the gale  
 Only the yachts tacking to and fro  
 Across the cove.

*poems by*

*jo morgan*

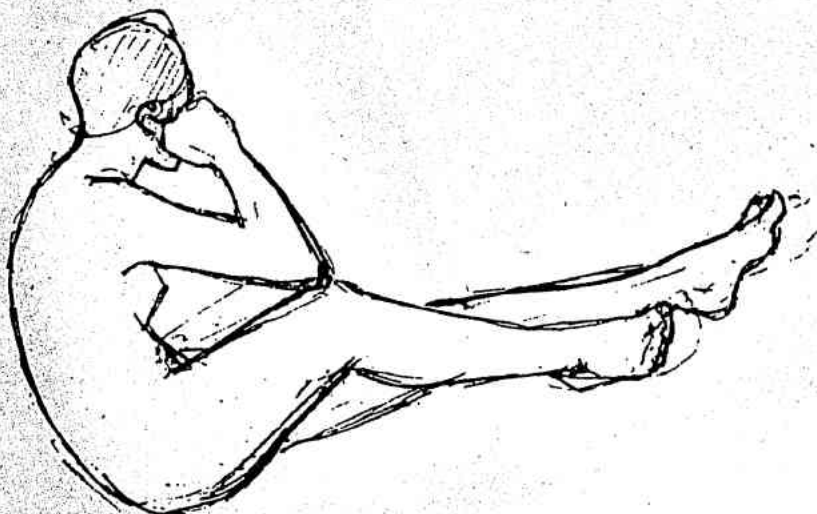
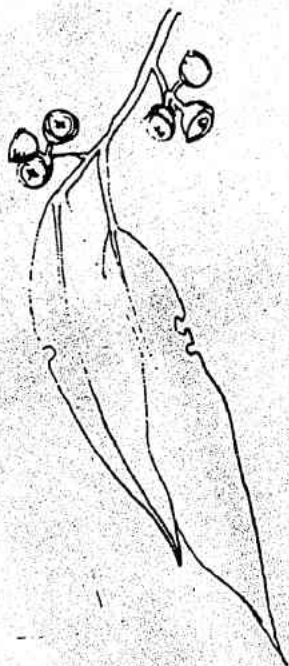
The yellow fields stretched out  
 Snapped at the horizon  
 With two figures leaning forward  
 Balancing the wind  
 Heads bowed they crossed the paddock  
 Leapt fences and left  
 Footprints behind in moist cowslips.

*she*

She turned in anger  
 Clouded black on a windswept void  
 Where she paints the landscape  
 Rolling back and watched the words  
 Fall, still, then silent  
 And she would have flung them high  
 Words of anger glowing like cinders  
 That catch the breeze and beseech the sky.

The laughter that you give  
 With the gentle touch that brushes back  
 The pain forgotten  
 With the lips I kiss  
 And the smile of eyes that hold me close

To the throb of heart  
 I am pressed tight  
 Like rose petals strewn  
 Between pages  
 Of stopped time



The stretched tension of time  
 And the sunlight flecks  
 Motionless. The  
 Wind has stopped  
 And trees don't sway  
 In faces passing by  
 There are no lips, no eyes, only  
 White blurs with lids  
 Pressed down tight  
 And huddled close to you.  
 To you stretched time is  
 Sapping  
 And bones crumbling  
 Ashes and dust  
 Never sleep. This vigil it  
 Folds back on time  
 And you secure and batten down  
 The flaps and flags that would fly out.  
 Only the wind and time have stopped  
 And white blurred faces  
 That rush by  
 Show no traces  
 Of the tears they cry.

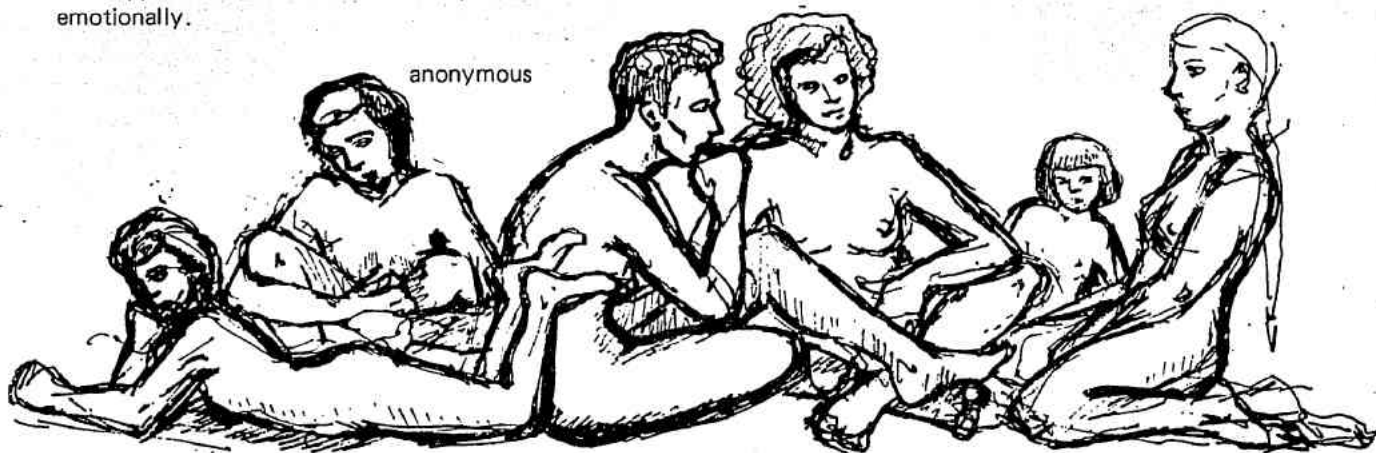
*WOMEN WRITE*



PRISONER

At the age of 20 she made her  
 escape from a stifling patriarchy  
 and took on her first role of  
 motherhood by marrying  
 He was underprivileged  
 emotionally,  
 She tried to nourish him,  
 She received his sexual and emotional neuroses  
 He insinuated they were her own,  
 He told her he never wanted to marry her  
 She'd ruined his brilliant career,  
 he didn't love her,  
 he hit her, on their honeymoon,  
 She forbore,  
 he loved her all along  
 but didn't know how to let himself  
 She couldn't realise there was no love.  
 He released his aggression and sexual  
 tension on her,  
 and others,  
 he drank with the boys,  
 She waited for him,  
 2am she went to bed,  
 She carried their child,  
 He told her she looked ugly,  
 a pregnant cow,  
 He looked for a more attractive bed partner,  
 He kept her in the house all day  
 tied to the children,  
 He liked her to be in when he got home,  
 2 am . . .  
 He was jealous of her friends,  
 She couldn't invite them home,  
 Accused her of being selfish,  
 neglecting the children,  
 He left job after job,  
 dragging her and the children  
 from house to house,  
 He obtained his transfer  
 by saying his wife didn't like the climate,  
 He called her his 'little woman'  
 She was behind him,  
 necessary but not appreciated,  
 a complement to his social climb,  
 People knew him by name and  
 his 'little woman' appeared on his arm  
 at social functions,  
 At 40 she was reborn,  
 liberated,  
 She got a job,  
 She began to hate him,  
 She was a success,  
 He resented it,  
 He got nastier,  
 She couldn't leave him  
 She needed his money,  
 She is his prisoner,  
 He frightens her,  
 She must shut up or he will hit her,  
 It is not worth protesting,  
 She has no way out,  
 She is only alive at work,  
 When he is away,  
 it is heaven, she invites her friends home,  
 They are both ruined from their 20 year long  
 battle,  
 He deteriorates quickly,  
 She doesn't care,  
 His failure makes him nastier,  
 She forbears  
 She is sick to death of him,  
 She increases her work hours,  
 Her children are gone,  
 She wants to get out  
 and save herself,  
 She is scared,  
 She is his prisoner,  
 literally,  
 emotionally.

anonymous



WOMEN WRITE

MARKET PLACE

The men gather in a tight, compact mob,  
 make an impenetrable barrier  
 Lords of their territory  
 nonchalant, secure in masculine camaraderie,  
 Excited, anticipating new flesh  
 Station themselves in the market place  
 wait impatiently.  
 New flesh edges its way in,  
 Nervous, excited, unsure,  
 garnished to tantalise,  
 Marketeers' absorbed attention  
 sizes up the produce,  
 Wolf whistles signal: appreciation  
 Acquisitive eyes survey the merchandise top to bottom,  
 There's a nice hindquarter, here's a good rump,  
 Categorising . . . serviceable? discardable?  
 A goer or not?  
 New flesh feels its way, ill confident, intimidated  
 chosen, rejected.  
 Cans are stockpiled  
 Masculine confidence increases ten-fold,  
 Chosen flesh enters the impenetrable barrier,  
 begins to relax,  
 first attempt at socialisation,  
 a success,  
 due thanks to their rump,  
 Inferior flesh retreats,  
 defensive, nervous, disappointed,  
 self-esteem plummets,  
 Bidders and the bidden,  
 rendezvous in the market place.

anonymous



A DOG'S LIFE

Gemma, she was pretty — well everyone said she was pretty. I think they meant she was symmetrical. No uneven, out of the place marks. And she was timid — a real little girl. But there was more to Gemma than that. I knew there was more behind her. I got this impression first of all by the fact that she never responded to whistles. In fact she used to sort of scowl when someone whistled. She didn't like to be overhanded by people she didn't know — particularly men. It was as if she didn't trust their cool reassuring, enticing voices. She sort of froze if they handled her too much. Anyway I figured all of this showed that Gemma had more to her than just — as the cliché goes — a pretty face.

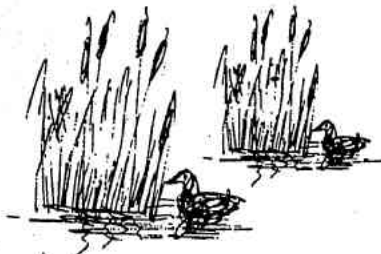
She was vulnerable though, particularly vulnerable and she knew it. Her hole was there, unprotected for any dog to abuse, and she was powerless, totally powerless. Sometimes she'd submit to the forces of one of the other dogs, but each time she seemed a little more reserved, sort of saddened. She was slowly losing her young personality. Each time a penis left her, it was if it dragged a little of her soul with it. I don't respond to whistles either you know and nor do I like being touched, pervertedly touched. I got Gemma for protection. I wanted protection. We protect each other but each time it hurts a little more.

Lying in bed, on my back, a ten stone weight on top of me, I thought of Gemma. It finished and he too had taken the little bit of soul I had left. It had mixed with his semen and floated away. He rolled over and slept and I lay awake listening to Gemma howl at the moon. She knew my experience and I knew hers.

Gemma and I left the ten stone weight. We went by ourselves, and stayed in a house together. We didn't do much — talked a lot, sat a lot, read and wrote a lot, but still as though through the cracks in the wall, or under the windows, an oppressing, threatening wind blew in. We shivered, and wondered and were all alone. Dogs came and hung around the yard. Gemma hid. The ten stone weight rang and rang and I hid. We sat together, stroking and stroking and getting more and more worked up.

It was a cold, bleak day when Gemma and I walked to the shops to get the week's supply. We walked once a week to the shops to get food, but today something felt different. We walked in fear, as the dogs ran for Gemma, and the boys honked and whistled as they drove by. Today was different though. Something was going to happen today. We bought the groceries, and with the last five dollars I had saved, I bought a round of bullets. We walked back, and came to sit in the kitchen. I had some coffee and Gemma drank some warm milk. We sat and looked at each other for a long time. It grew colder and colder, and more and more bleak. I went upstairs and got the gun. Without another sound, Gemma and I left the house. We walked towards the shops, and as the dogs came for us and Gemma's eternal hole, we shot them one by one. The street was littered with dead dogs. And as we turned for home, the ten stone weight approached and we shot him too. We went home, had some dinner and went to sleep. It's a dog's life really.

M.L.N.



# RAPE CRISIS

*talk with women who believe you and care*

## CANBERRA RAPE CRISIS CENTRE

The Canberra Rape Crisis Centre offers a 24 hour a day, 7 days a week service, run by women for women. We do not prevent or force women to go to the police, however we do provide information on the legal process.

Our aim is to give *sympathetic support* to women who have been victims of rape, incest, sexual assault or harassment, or who are in fear of assault.

We can also explain *medical needs*: pregnancy and VD tests are essential for rape victims, and we can arrange for women doctors to do them.

The Rape Crisis Service is *completely confidential* regardless of age. So if you have been raped or assaulted, no matter how long ago, and are still living with the memory or threat, feel free to ring anonymously and talk to a woman who will understand.

We have a library of books, leaflets and newspaper cuttings which is accessible to people doing research into any aspect of rape. We also keep a register of self-defence classes available in Canberra.

If you are interested in becoming involved, the Rape Crisis Collective meets 5.30 each Thursday at the Women's Centre, 3 Lobelia Street, O'Connor.

### 1976-1980 STATISTICS SUMMARY

The Canberra Rape Crisis Centre Collective has compiled the following statistics from the information provided by women who have approached the collective for help in the five years from 1976 to 1980.

The offences included rape, assault, prowlers and harassment. The data has been reduced to percentages. In calculating the percentages, only the cases where the information required was known were used. Cases where that particular piece of information was unknown were not used.

#### Increase in Complaints over Prior Year:

1980	160%
1979	0
1978	230%
1977	130%

#### Age of Victim and Offender:

We do not usually know the age of the offender. However, he is usually older than the victim;

	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	25-30	31-35	36-40	41 over
woman	0	9	28	37	13	1.5	6	1.5	3
Man	0	0	0	73	9	4.5	9	0	4.5

#### Place of Attack:

Playground/shops	2%
Home	53
Car	16
Street/Park	19
Work	3
Others house	4
Cinema/Club/Hotel	9

#### Police Involvement:

Woman approached police	28%
Police took action	47
Police took no action:	53

#### Type of Coercion:

Adult abusing child's trust	11%
Use of violence	62
Overpowering	12
Threats	13

## abortion counselling service

The Abortion Counselling Service is a non-profit making service run by women for women. We aim to ensure that women have not only the right to choose abortion but the right to choose a service which allows them to preserve their dignity and self respect. We do this through providing information, support and referral both over the phone and in person. We provide an opportunity for a woman to explore her feelings about her pregnancy and the alternatives available to her in a supportive and non judgemental atmosphere.

The practical situation in the ACT is fraught with hazards. The two public hospitals Royal Canberra and Woden Valley are restricted by the adoption in the ACT of the Victorian, Mennhenit Ruling which requires two doctors to decide whether or not abortion can be an option for a woman. This is further complicated by the two doctors having to write to the medical superintendent of the hospital and compounded by a limit of 120 abortions per year between the two hospitals. We see the restrictions on numbers, the tedious and time consuming process required and the power to decide being designated to the doctors, (mostly male) as yet another example of the patriarchal control of women's bodies.

We receive minimal funding through the Community Development Fund. This allows us to pay a part-time co-ordinator, pay rent on our room at the Women's Centre, pay phone bills etc. Most of us

are unpaid workers and we work collectively making decisions by consensus. We urge any interested women to join the collective. Please ring to find out when the next meeting is.

Because of the unviable situation in Canberra we usually refer to Sydney Clinics where women are treated with respect and concern. This is done usually from our centre, which is open from 10am-1pm on weekdays. During hours when we have no-one on roster we have a taped message with other contact numbers for women needing to speak with someone urgently.

We would like to see our hours of service extended, but to do this we require more interested women. There remains lots of political work to improve fertility control for women in the ACT and this means lots of discussion, in order for us to make informed decisions concerning our lobbying.

With medical/technical intervention in women's bodies especially surrounding pregnancy increasing, there are always new areas of concern for us - the implications of each new contraceptive being 'sold' to women as the new answer; continuing to monitor doctors and their sympathies, or lack of them; evaluating the new abortion services available in Sydney to establish the quality of their service.

We believe that feminist services offer women the most current information available without judgements and it is for this reason we advise the use of feminist abortion clinics, where the staff are all sympathetic and trained to do the work they do, rather than as is often the case in public hospitals having nursing staff with moral objections to abortions who just happen, unfortunately to be rostered on that day. English and American studies also proved that free standing clinics have fewer complications on either emotional or physical grounds.

Clinics run by women for women are non profit, the money charged covers costs only. Many 'male' run clinics insist on many unnecessary and expensive pathology tests as well as charging several hundred dollars more than the feminist clinics per abortion.

We must fight for control of our own bodies questioning not only what is done to us but by whom and for whose benefit.

**ABORTION COUNSELLING SERVICE**  
3 Lobelia Street, O'Connor  
tel. 478070

# \*\*\*\*\*WOMEN AND REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGY\*\*\*\*\*

Most women in Australia now exercise more control over our own bodies than ever before. The "Woman's Body: Woman's Choice" campaigns of the 60s and 70s have resulted in liberalised access to abortion and contraception, as well as raised awareness of parenting and sexuality choices generally. (Check any Cleo or Women's Weekly).

This new-found power is now being threatened in a different way. The male-dominated, government funded research into reproductive technology raises many questions. Do we want to 'breed' a superior race through artificial fertilisation? The much praised 'cures' for infertility offered by In-vitro Fertilisation offer false hope and heartbreak to many — success to very few. Meanwhile more traditional and reliable methods of overcoming infertility (such as microsurgery) are being neglected.

The medical profession gains prestige and power through these marvels of modern medicine. But none have justified to the public (whose money they are spending) why one artificial embryo should be more important than the thousands of Australian children, particularly Aborigines, who die in their infancy from malnutrition-related diseases.

It is surely in our interests as women that such research be made more appropriate to our needs. For example, we need to know how often infertility is the result of contraceptive pills, or the use of pesticide chemicals.

Instead, we are in a situation where we have little information and less power over the decisions that are made. Yet ultimately it is women's bodies, and women's reproductive capacities that are affected.

For these reasons, feminists have become concerned about the implications of reproductive technology. Below is a paper by Robyn Rowland which was presented at the 4th Women and Labour Conference in Brisbane this year. As a result of this, a national feminist network has been set up to research, monitor and publicise developments in reproductive technology. We have called for a moratorium on further research into areas such as artificial wombs, cloning, and surrogate motherhood until we have more information and full public debate on the implications of this research on society as a whole, and on women in particular.

The A.C.T. contact for the National Feminist Network on Reproductive Technologies is Helen Campbell ph. 488 070 for further information.

## OF WOMEN BORN?

### THE RELATIONSHIP OF WOMEN

#### TO NEW REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGIES

The feminist debate over the new reproductive technology is just beginning in Australia, although it has been active elsewhere.(1) These new techniques include: in vitro fertilisation (IVF); artificial insemination by donor sperm (AID); the use of donor ova, sperm and embryos; foetal monitoring; the sex preselection.(2) But behind these techniques experimentation and research are carried out about which women are mostly unaware, and which are conducted by a male-dominated medical profession in the name of helping to 'cure' infertility and with the catch cry, 'women want it'. This research includes work on cloning, sex preselection and the development of the artificial womb and placenta.(3)

I will restrict this paper to a discussion on the attitudes within the women's movement to mothering, and then consider how these attitudes relate to the new technologies. I will suggest that we should feel some anxiety about the male control of this area; that men are working towards ending their 'alienation' in the reproductive process, posing a threat to the future of women as a group.

The meaning and value of motherhood has been an important issue for most generations of women. The constancy of the argument of biological determinism versus cultural influence, or the nature/nurture debate, has continued to rouse feminist ire. If we accept a biological cause for behaviour, we have accepted that it is immutable; cannot be changed. If we support the influence of culture and socialization as determining roles and behaviour, we allow for people to change; but have often dissociated our behaviour from our bodies entirely.

The revival of the women's movement in the sixties was characterized by a fierce rejection of biological determinism. Feminists argued that there was no 'natural' behaviour for a woman and that 'feminine' characteristics were socialized into woman. A subtle change began in the late seventies however, with a reaffirmation of the 'good' qualities of womanhood from a feminist perspective. This argument maintained that, not only should women cultivate the so-called masculine characteristics such as independence and assertiveness in themselves, but that the feminine qualities such as warmth and nurturance are equally valuable. The issue is in fact a political one, not able even to be 'proved' or 'disproved', but only useful as a debating point in the endless battle of women to assert their own value and worth. As Dora Russell pointed out in the 1920s, patriarchy has used woman's *different* biology to justify her socially *inferior* position (Spender, 1982).

In the suffragette period the move for the vote was based on a desire to improve and consolidate the family and women's position within it. In Britain, by the 1920s, the need for effective contraception had become a political issue when women realised that the means of stopping continuous pregnancy were known and available but denied them by government policy (Spender, 1982).(4). The constant childbearing by women wore their health and many women experienced the early deaths of their children. Dora Russell in her campaign coined the slogan: 'It is four times as dangerous to bear a child as to work in a mine: and mining is a man's most dangerous trade' (Spender, 1982, p.480).

In Australia, the situation was worse for pioneer women. Clara Weekes wrote in 1903:

Every child that a woman bears entails on the majority of them nine months of misery, more or less acute, with a culminating period of agony at the end. When this is repeated from ten to sixteen, or even twenty times, with intervals of only a year or more between, is it to be wondered at that many mothers die quite young of sheer exhaustion? . . . I know of one woman who had twenty-two children, and less than one-third grew up. (Daniels & Murnane, 1980, p.1320)

Contraception and abortion have always been big issues for the women's movement because they represent control of our bodies for the individual woman herself.

It was not until the declining population rate became an issue in Australia that attention was given to infant and maternal welfare. Unfortunately, motherhood then became a kind of sanitised experience, controlled and regimented by 'experts'. One of the first moves of the renewed women's movement of the sixties was to reject the advice of 'experts' with respect to child care. Spurred on by the belief that 'maternal instinct' is a social construct not a biological destiny women discovered through 'rap' and CR groups that 'expert' advice did not fit with women's experience. Bowlby had scared a generation of women into thinking that if they left their child for even brief periods, trauma would result. Though it cost them a great deal in guilt, women rejected those advisers.(5)

'Maternity as natural' also trapped women into the nuclear family, which came to be seen as a fortress of male dominance. Married women were chained through it to a dependent existence: they worked for no wage, had little job security, could be sexually exploited or abused with the sanction of the law, and had the status of a minor. Within this context there was no choice for women, and 'choice' was the focal point of the movement.

Contraception and abortion have always been big issues for the women's movement because they represent control of our bodies for the individual woman herself.

A variety of causes were seen to guide women into motherhood. They had children because they were socialized or conditioned to do so, and were convinced of the rewards of mothering; in order to gain a self-identity in a world which continually denied this to them; to prove their worth and attain the status of an 'adult'. For many, motherhood represented a power base from which to negotiate the terms of their existence and survival, and for many this is still the case. (6)

Many women began to make a choice to remain childless and became partners in childfree relationships. In 1972, Shulamith Firestone wrote in the *Dialectic of sex*: 'Pregnancy is barbaric . . . the temporary deformation of the body of the individual for the sake of the species' (p.188). Women, she said, should be freed from 'the tyranny of reproduction by every means possible'. (p.193)

Mary O'Brien in her analysis *The Politics of Reproduction* (1981) comments that traditional wisdom had said: 'Women are naturally trapped in the childbearing function/women therefore cannot participate in social life on equal terms with men'. (p.20)

In place of this she says, feminists like De Beauvoir and Firestone claimed: 'Women are naturally trapped in the childbearing function/therefore the liberation of women depends on their being freed from this trap'. (p.20) To Firestone, this freedom was only possible if women were liberated from maternity through use of a test-tube baby system.

In recent years, however, a further re-evaluation of the value of maternity has begun. Many feminists are seeking now to recreate the experience of motherhood and family in a non-exploitative way. Works such as those by Elisabeth Badinter (1981) and Ann Dally (1982) have helped to clarify the *mythology* of motherhood as opposed to the *experience* women have of motherhood. Badinter analyses the development of 'maternal instinct' as a construct, showing that 'no universal and absolute conduct on the part of the mother has emerged'. (p.327) She concludes that the difference between giving birth and having the sole responsibility for rearing the child have been conveniently confused by patriarchy and that this is the key to women's oppression. She places faith in what she sees as the emergence of 'father love' in 'history of feelings'. (p.322) Women are demanding that men share in the love for a child and in her/his development. 'Henceforth', she says, 'women will "force" men to be good fathers, to share equitably the pleasures and burden, the anxieties and sufferings of mothering'. (p.325) Though these conclusions have a utopian aura, they are shared by many women who have managed to involve the father of their child more fully in parenting, and by those who still struggle to do so. However, one statement within her vision has worrying overtones:

Under the pressure exerted by women, the new father mothers equally and in the traditional mother's image. *He creeps in like another mother, between the mother and the child, who experiences almost indiscriminately as intimate a contact with the father as with the mother.* (p.324) (my stress)

A major text within this new perspective has been Adrienne Rich's *Of Woman Born. Motherhood as Experience and Institution*. (1977). Rich explores the institution of motherhood as it has been controlled by men and patriarchal society to the point where it has become a distorted experience for women. It is this institutionalisation of motherhood which is the problem, not the experience itself. Women have been divorced from their bodies by the mythologizing of them on the one hand, and the denigration of them on the other.



# ...REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGY...REPRODUCTIVE

Mindful always of the danger of the biological determinism argument, she moves beyond it to point out that we are in fact our bodies as well as mind, spirit and intellect, but how we define that relationship should be in the control of women, not of men. She writes:

Many women see any appeal to the physical as a denial of the mind. We have been perceived for too many centuries as pure Nature, exploited and raped like the earth and the solar system; small wonder that we now long to become Culture: pure spirit, mind. Yet it is precisely this culture and its political institutions which have split us off from itself. In so doing it has split us off from life, becoming death-culture of gratification, abstraction, and the will to power which has reached its most refined destructiveness in this century. It is this culture and politics of abstraction which women are talking of changing, of bringing to an accountability in human terms. (p.285)

Male-stream dominant culture has worked to divorce women from the experience of motherhood as they would choose it, based on the fear men have of the recreative power of women.

This approach has been taken by Mary O'Brien in *The Politics of Reproduction*. (1981) O'Brien advocates that feminists have been too ready to cut reproduction out of their lives because of its history of entrapment, and we should in fact be using it as a starting point of a new political theory: to redefine an understanding of gender relations *beginning* at reproduction. This differs from the feminist approach which considers gender relations in terms of the means of production; the valuing of men's work and the devaluing of women's. O'Brien writes: 'I argue that it is from an adequate understanding of the process of reproduction, nature's traditional and bitter trap for the suppression of women, that women can begin to understand their possibilities and their freedom'. (p.9) She claims that men have their rituals and ritualistic meetings which reinforce them as 'male' but women lack this particular structure. 'To celebrate being 'female', O'Brien claims we need some rituals, and the birth experience is a primary one which in the past was shared with other women. But this has been broken by the intervention of medicine in birth. As medical men became more involved in birth and the control of women's bodies, the birthing mother became more and more isolated. Rich writes:

The experience of lying half-awake in a barred crib, in a labor room with other women moaning in a drugged condition, where "no one comes" except to do a pelvic examination or give an injection, is a classic experience of alienated child-birth. The loneliness, the sense of abandonment of being imprisoned, powerless, and depersonalized is the chief collective memory of women who have given birth in American hospitals (1977, p.176).

In fact, the breaking of that isolation now in maternity hospitals is represented by the presence of the father, *not* by a reassembling of the women's presence which used to be associated with the ritual.

O'Brien goes on to discuss what she calls 'reproductive consciousness'. In her terms, the first significant historical change was the discovery of physiological paternity which transformed male reproductive consciousness: men discovered that they were, in fact, the seed. The second and more recent change in reproductive consciousness was triggered by technology in the form of contraception, which gave women the freedom to choose or reject parenthood.

The fact that men provide the seed in reproduction however, also ensures their alienation from 'genetic continuity', i.e., 'unlike the other role — the necessity to produce — the reproductive role resists male participation and control'. (p.33) Because women bear the child and 'labour' at birth, they have the certainty of their essential participation in the genetic continuity. The way in which men have always annulled their alienation from reproduction is described by O'Brien as the 'appropriation of the child'. (p.36) Thus by law or by force, men appropriate and control women and children. This is intended to eliminate their 'uncertainty' in the reproductive process. (7)

O'Brien sees this alienation experience reflected in obstetrics, to which men have brought 'the sens of their own alienated parental experience of reproduction, and have translated this into the forms and languages of an "objective science"'. (p.46) The power men have claimed to make themselves 'the universal' and women 'the other' has enabled them to keep women isolated from each other, to break their culture, and to exclude them from power: 'all of these have obscured the cultural consciousness of femininity and the universality of maternal consciousness' (p.50).

The female reproductive consciousness is thus seen as universal and common to all women, mothers or not, as it represents an understanding of our place in the continuity of life, which is explored through our physiology (but not that alone), and is reinforced by, for example, menstruation, menopause and pregnancy. O'Brien's perspective builds on Rich's analysis in this sense, and like Badinter, she sees a role for men in the solution of this conflict:

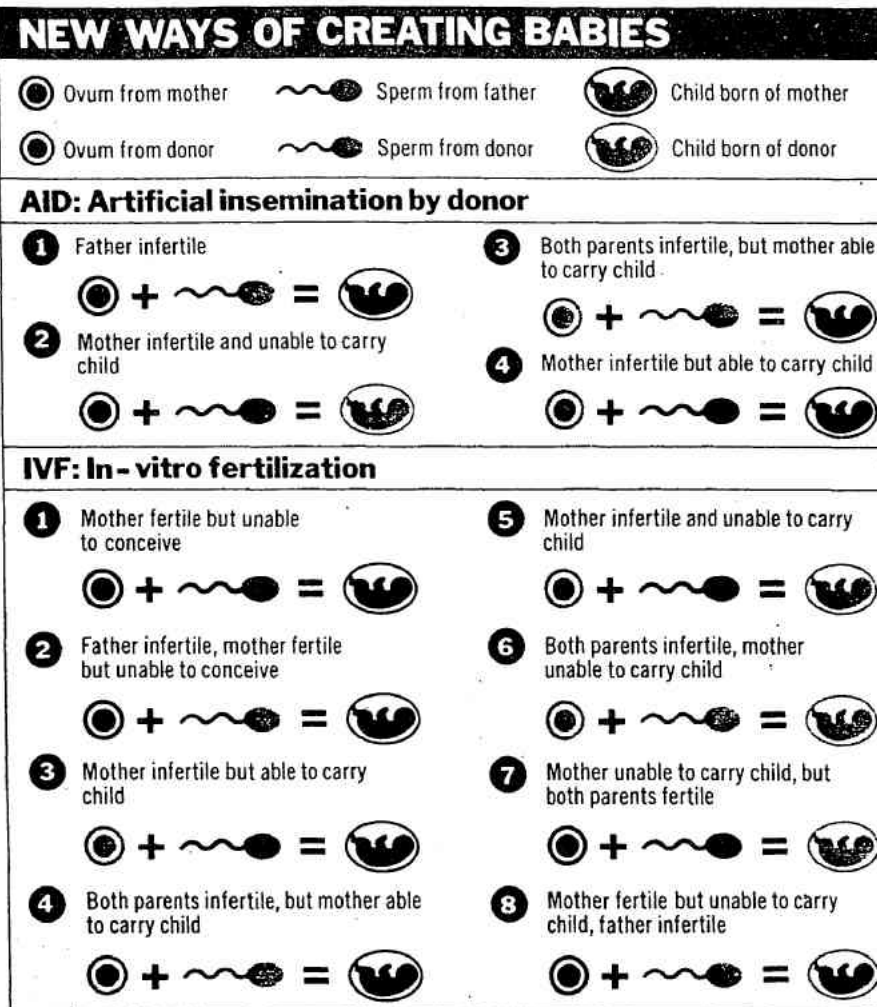
Finally, the integration of women on equal terms into the productive process is a necessary but not significant condition of liberation. Liberation also depends on the reintegration of men on equal terms into the reproductive process. (p.210)

Another interesting viewpoint is that of Barbara Wishart, an Australian lesbian mother who conceived her daughter through artificial insemination by an unknown donor. She reinforces Rich and O'Brien when she writes that the experience of motherhood 'has given me a deep bond with other mothers I know, and a sense of continuity not only with the women in my own family, but also with the continuous line of women from antiquity to the present day who have borne children.' (p.31) Wishart stresses that it is the structure within which motherhood is experienced which oppresses women and we need not devalue, as patriarchy does, the experience of motherhood itself which still has 'something *positive* or *worthwhile* or even *wonderful* about it. (1982, p.27, her italics)

and contradictions, women have succeeded at mothering' (p.7). Curthoys and Chodorow also see the necessity for shared parenthood with men as the only solution to the negative value currently placed on mothering by our society.

In her article on 'Maternal Thinking', Ruddick also analyses the qualities of thinking and caring which enforced mothering has in fact developed in women. Thus, though the practices of mothering are oppressive, at its best, the qualities of mothering or maternal thinking embody the kind of caring we would wish men to express to others. They stand in opposition to the destructive, violent and self-aggrandizing characteristics of men. Ruddick too insists that the only way of introducing these values into the political domain is to assimilate men into the private domain of child care. This would break down the separation of the two spheres, take the pressure off women to live vicariously through their children; and give men an investment in making the public domain more committed to reforming childcare procedures. However, she also warns: 'But in our eagerness, we mustn't forget that so long as a mother is not effective publicly and self-respecting privately, male presence can be harmful as well as beneficial'. (1980, p.361)

We can see from this discussion that the experience of maternity and family for women is a continuing dilemma.



These writers have stressed a new feminist perspective on motherhood itself. But does this get us away from the issues of the restrictiveness of the nuclear family? We seem to be moving back to a position which says that women must continue to strive to change the family (i.e. men) from within its structures — very hard emotional work. It is also dangerously close to making the problem an individual one again, rather than a collective 'the personal is political', social problem.

Betty Friedan has caused a controversy with her latest book *The Second Stage* (1981) in which she attempts to point out that 'our failure was our blind spot about the family' (p.203). This book has severe failings as a feminist analysis, but has deserved neither the flagellation given it by feminists, nor the hysterical support given it by antifeminists. (In fact, the book says more about Friedan and feminist 'burnout' than it does about the state of the women's movement.) It raises again the issue of whether women can actually have choice in our society the way it is structured, and what it is that women want from the family structure. In *Women Who Do and Women Who Don't Join the women's movement* (1984), Anne Curthoys, an Australian feminist has written a provocative view of the family, claiming that for all its disadvantages, it does fulfil the real needs of people for 'security', commitment and continuity'.

Chodorow too, in her book *The Reproduction of Mothering* (1978) traces the way mothering is passed on from mother to daughter. She writes that women by and large want to mother, and get gratification from their mothering; and finally, that, with all the conflicts

There is also the continuing problem of wanting to include men in the child rearing sphere in order to share with them the joy and the burdens, or in order to raise the status of the job and to hopefully bring changes through men in the public domain's attitudes to childcare. The element of anxiety which exists however, comes from the suspicion on the part of women that if men *do* get involved they will in fact take over, and what sphere would then be woman's. We can look again at Badinter's comment: 'He creeps in like another mother, between the mother and child ...'. (p.324)

All these discussions of mothering have assumed that conception will continue to be based on intercourse. How valid will an analysis like Mary O'Brien's be if the primary means of conception becomes artificial? When the new artificial means of conception have been discussed, feminists have been receptive. The techniques have been seen as helping infertile women, or those with infertile husbands, or lesbian and single women to create a family. Yet in fact, only women who are white, middle class and in a relationship with a man can have access to these technologies.

There are a number of arguments which have been stated by feminists against reproductive technology. Ruth Hubbard (1981), for example, has argued against IVF on the grounds that it ties women's reproduction to marriage alone; that its complicated technology excludes women from administering and controlling it so they are locked into a high-technology model of birth; and that the enormous expense of it means offering minimal health care to other women.

# TECHNOLOGY ... REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGY...

Rebecca Albury (1983) has also raised the issue of 'ownership' of frozen embryos, which could lead to manipulation of women. If couples are given joint ownership of the embryo, she writes:

The joint ownership of an embryo *in vitro* might extend to joint ownership *in vivo*, opening new opportunities for male control of women. The male owner might forbid the female joint owner from smoking during pregnancy and be able to secure a court order to enforce his prohibition on the grounds of protecting his 'property'. He might be able to prevent her from aborting an unwanted pregnancy . . . . Feminist scrutiny of proposed laws will be necessary to insure against outlawing abortion by regulating IVF. (p.22)

But let us consider one aspect only of the debate: the role of men. Part of the reason for men wanting to be more involved in parenting is their desire to end the 'alienation' of which O'Brien talks. But some of the new technology could bring them even closer to the goal of appropriation in a very real sense: technology like the artificial womb and placenta would give men *control* over conception and reproduction itself. The basic question with respect to technology which affects women's bodies must always be: who controls it.

I have outlined elsewhere the development of cloning, sex preselection and ectogenesis (artificial womb/placenta) see footnote 1). These open the way for greater male control. Edward Grossman (1971) for example, has staunchly supported development of the artificial womb, listing the following advantages: foetal medicine would be improved (!); the child could be immunized while still inside the 'womb', the environment could be *safer* than a woman's womb; geneticists could program in some superior trait; sex preselection would be simple; women would be 'spared the discomfort' of childbirth; women could be permanently sterilized; and men would be able to prove for the first time who is the father of the child.

Other techniques make exploitation of women's reproductive capacity easier. Foetal research is a major issue yet untouched. Ramsay (1970) has pointed out that women will soon be pressured to consent to giving up their aborted foetus for experimentation. Surrogate mothers are another group who face exploitation. Those seeking surrogates have been found to be 'highly intelligent professionals in the thirty to forty age group . . . they know a lot about surrogacy; they know what they want and they know how to bend the rules their way'.(9)

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And who are the surrogates whose bodies are used as incubators? Could they be working class women who need the money? Remember the wet-nurse system of the nineteenth century when working class women were exploited by those who could afford them? If surrogate users decide to sex preselect as well, we will have an interesting situation: working class women's bodies used to produce the next generation of male power-holders. Non-surrogate women in the working class will still produce girls, sex preselection being costly, while the powerful will select male offspring. The majority of women could therefore be locked into poverty and locked out of access to financial power. The basic racism of our society will also ensure that non-white women have limited access to the new technology.

If these technologies were in the hands of women whose bodies they most intimately affect, we may be able to utilize them to free women and give them new choices in ways which Firestone had begun to envisage. But past experience teaches us that the control of women's bodies is a continual battleground of the sexes. We are constantly being used as 'living laboratories' and suffer the consequences. Mary Daly in *Gyn/ecology* (1978) and Ehrenrich and English (1978) in *For Her Own Good* have clearly outlined this history, showing the appropriation of medicine by men, the elimination of women healers, and the resulting exploitation of women through their bodies.

The pill was hailed once as the true liberator of women, yet its resulting 'freedom' is now viewed with suspicion and scepticism by feminists. It ensured that most women users had control over their fertility; but also that they were then 'at fault' if they became pregnant. It allowed men to become less responsible and women to become targets for sexual use more readily. In addition, it led to higher rates of cancer and thrombosis, and continues to be a drug which is taken on the basis of little and poor research into its side-effects. Depro-provera, the most 'efficient' contraception has placed many women at risk. The Dalkon Shield, a contraceptive inter-uterine device (IUD), has in fact caused deaths of

women through infection and septic abortion, and represents again the use of women's bodies by a medicine little concerned for the wellbeing of its victims.

With the advent of the artificial womb and placenta, men will finally be able to divorce women totally from reproduction. It could be the beginning of what Janice Raymond has called 'previctimization' - the destruction of women before they are even born. Grossman (1971) has written that 'natural pregnancy may become an anachronism . . . the uterus will become appendix-like'. (p.49) Within this context we need to reassess what 'choice' is for women. As Barbara Katz Rothman (1984) has commented in gaining the choice to control the quality of our children, we may be losing the choice *not* to control the quality, the choice of simply accepting them as they are. She points out that we are also forfeiting the right not to know some things - like the sex of the unborn child.

Why would men want so desperately to control the reproductive process? They themselves give three major reasons. First, we need to improve the genetic pool. Every one in five people now living (20%) bears a deleterious mutation that has arisen with her/him and which will be passed onto her/his offspring. This is in addition to the load of genetic deficiency from the previous generation. We need to control the quantity and quality of people or genetic disorders will increase (Ramsay, 1970). Second, most of the research is essential in understanding cancer and the immune system. And third, women want it!

There are other explanations. Part of it represents the ancient fear of women's power. Women bleed regularly and do not die. We recreate human beings within our own bodies, these 'magical' powers represent little power in real terms, though for many women in the past and in the future to come, they may still represent the only power base they have from which to negotiate their terms of existence. Ultimately, women have always been needed to have children - in the past.

In her discussion of mythology, Rich comments on the fear and mystery which have surrounded motherhood and kept man in awe. To scientists, this area of women's 'specialness' is the last stronghold of nature, which they have always sought to dominate through the use of technology. This is exemplified in the statement by Grossman that with the artificial womb, 'the awfulness associated with pregnancy and childbirth will have nothing to feed on, and motherhood, if it continues to excite any awe at all, will not do so more than fatherhood'.(p.48)

In the terms of Mary O'Brien's analysis, men will have overcome their alienation within the reproductive process by ensuring women share this alienation. What would the reproductive consciousness of women then be?

There is a sense in which this technology is out of our control. Women are greatly underrepresented in the sciences, particularly in the research areas, and in the policy decision-making spheres. Bush (1983) has pointed out that technology has been defined largely by men in a negative power-oriented way and we need to re-introduce the concept of equity within it. But how to do so is a difficult question. Adrienne Rich has written:

If women boycott the laboratories and libraries of scientific institutions (to which we have barely begun to gain access) we will not even know what research and technology is vital to the control of our bodies. It is, rather, essential that women become well informed about current developments in genetics, cloning and extra-uterine reproduction. A two-pronged approach is needed: just as more women are receiving medical training, while other women are educating themselves and each other as lay persons in the fields of health-care and childbirth, so we need women scientists within the institutions, and lay women who are knowledgeably monitoring the types of decisions and research that go on there, and disseminating the information they gather. (1977, p.282)

As Kass (1972) a doctor himself, has said, power 'rests only metaphorically with human kind; it rests in fact with particular men, geneticists, embryologists, obstetricians'. (p.45) Males run the governments, train the doctors, make birth control devices, allocate research grants, decide on the availability of abortion, own the companies who will market the products and make the money. The fact is that all women are guinea pigs in this experiment.

We have not been included in decisions about the technology, nor asked if we want it. Hanmer and Allen (1980) have said that women act as agents of male individual and social power. We continue to collude to our own disadvantage.

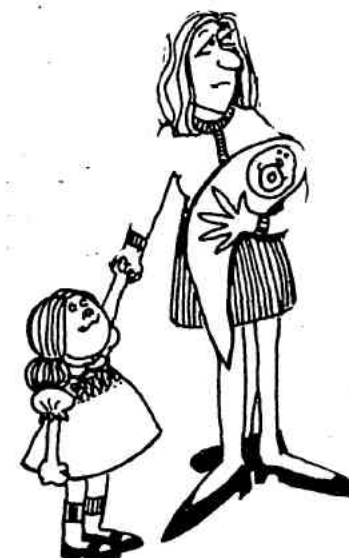
Kass (1972) commented: 'The advent of these new powers for human engineering means that some men may be destined to play God, to re-create other men in their own image'. Where will women's place be in this new 'society'? Will we be obsolete, permanently unemployed, disposable? Have we learned anything from experiences like those associated with the Pill? As Roberta Steinbacher says: 'who invented it, who manufactured it, who licensed it, who dispenses it? But who dies from it?' (1981, p.89)

Dr Robyn Rowland



## Footnotes:

1. Recently discussed at the Women's Worlds Conference, Second International Interdisciplinary Congress on Women, Groningen, The Netherlands, 1984, April.
2. See Arditti, R. Duelli Klein, R. and Minden, S (Eds.), *Test Tube Women - What Future for Motherhood?* London: Pandora Press, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984, and Holmes, H., Hoskins, B., and Gross, M. (Eds.) *The Custom-made Child? Women-centred perspectives*, Clifton, New Jersey: Humana Press, Inc., 1981.
3. See, *Test Tube Women* for elaboration and my paper to the ANZAAS Congress, ANU, May, 1984.
4. It was not until 1930 in Britain that contraceptive advice became available, and only 'where further pregnancy would be detrimental to health'. In Australia, votes and contraception were never linked as political issues. See 'Mrs Smyth & the body politic' by Farley Kelly in M. Bevan, M. James & C. Shute (eds.) *Worth Her Salt*, Sydney: Hale & Iremonger, 1982.
5. See E. Badinter, *The Myth of Motherhood. An historical view of the maternal instinct*. London: Souvenir Press, 1981, and A. Dally, *Inventing Motherhood. The Consequences of an ideal*, London: Burnett Books, 1982.
6. See A. Dworkin, *Right-Wing Women. The Politics of Domesticated Females*, London: The Women's Press, 1983 for the case that antifeminists have seen the history of patriarchal dominance and have opted for power in the family if possible, bargaining with their own self-identity and using sex and family in order to gain security.
7. 'Men are necessarily rooted in their biology, and their physiology is their fate', O'Brien, p.192.
8. See Rowland, R. The Social & Psychological consequences of secrecy in AID. Paper delivered to conference titled *AID and Adoption: Access to information* at Monash Bioethics Centre, November 2, 1983.
9. Lucy Twomey, 'Surrogate motherhood: a blessing or exploitation?' *The Australian*, May 2, 1983.



# The Woroni Guide to...

## ETIQUETTE

and

## Charm

□ A graceful walk is actually good-posture-in-motion; the traditional training method is to practise with a book on your head. Now, balancing a book (or anything else) on top of your head forces your body into proper alignment — and that is the foundation of both good posture and an attractive walk! Here's how your body should shape up when alignment is correct: Rib cage vertical, not tilted forward or backward... pelvis straight (if you had a tail, it would hang straight down, not tucked under between your legs!)... knees and feet pointing straight ahead. A plumb line would fall just in front of anklebone, just behind kneecap, through centre of hip joint and middle of waist, shoulder, ear lobe. (If you'd like to check yourself out, you can hang a tape measure down a full-length mirror and see.)

When I was growing up I was told that I must feel perfectly sure of myself, but that I must never show my assurance. I was taught to hesitate in a doorway for two reasons, to show myself for a moment as a framed picture, having carefully dressed for the occasion and also that my hesitation might be construed as a becoming flutter of maidenly modesty.

In the interests of poise, smoothness and convenience such a pause gives you time to see who is there, where they are and to locate your hostess. If you should burst into the room with a continuous movement you would have to stop anyway a few steps farther in and pirouette in the middle of the floor to get your bearings. Every one would look up at you as you lunged about for something or somebody to pounce upon and conversation would be momentarily paralysed.

Walking is supposed to carry us forward, but it carries most of us quite as far from side to side. Think of the energy this wobble consumes! No wonder we look anxious, puffy, and off balance. We recall the story of the man who rode a hundred miles on a motorcycle. He told a friend he had really come three hundred miles, one hundred straight ahead and two hundred up and down.

By walking on one line a woman will appear more graceful, and if there is any soft drapery about her costume she will seem almost to float into a room. A man will preserve his dignity by not bobbing about, and we will all save energy by the directness of the movement. This is a perfect example of our rule that the correct thing is always the shortest, smoothest, and simplest way to any point.

Before we leave the subject of walking let us just think a moment about walking up and down stairs. Here again, most of us bob, this time up and down.

The typical Southern woman has been taught from the cradle that men are grand and wonderful beings, protectors of the weak. She respects and leans on masculine strength unconsciously, which pleases the male of any age, race or condition beyond all else in the world.

Though we must have a deep-laid self-respect before we can have poise, the extreme of taking ourselves too seriously will inhibit the flow of charm in and through us. Being too serious about ourselves is as basically selfish as being over-sensitive. Charm goes out when selfishness goes in.

Charm is never extreme or strenuous about anything. There is always an ease about delightful poise, a relaxed grace, a smoothness, a polishing away of tenseness, a balm, a soothing effect.

These lovely qualities are the inspirational, spontaneous evidences of tact, based on kindness, interest and balance, tempered by the good taste that only poise can weigh out and measure to the moment.

*Without the clear vision of poise there can be no good taste.*

Let the complimenter have his little triumph of giving. Don't anticlimax him. Don't cap any one's climax at any time. It is an unbecoming error to tell something a little more extraordinary than what has just been said. Learn the charming habit of letting the other fellow have the stage, as it were, even in giving.

### The Written Word

This solves the difficulty in the case of women writing to men friends to whom they want to express closer friendship than the regulation "Yours sincerely"; for obviously "affectionately" should not be used then—nor in the case of men cousins, unless some special circumstances suggest it. "Yours," *tout court*, is to be deprecated and should be taboo. So is "Sincerely" by itself—an Americanism to be avoided in favour of the "Yours sincerely" of our use.

The use of "Believe me to be," "I remain," and so on, is now relegated to very formal occasions, and not used in ordinary correspondence. As a rule, the termination comes quite curtly, but it may always be led up to, as it were, by some kindly expression. "With kind regards" is constantly used to friends and acquaintances, or occasionally "With kind remembrances," when this is appropriate. More affectionate messages fall naturally into their place in the same way.

It may be taken as a general rule that such phrases should be definite in tone, and not begin with participles. "Hoping to see you soon" does not commend itself. "We shall hope to see you soon" is the more correct phraseology. Even the time-honoured "Wishing you a happy Christmas" is now looked at askance; "With all good wishes for Christmas" is far better. Small things, these, which nevertheless tell their tale. "Hoping you are well" and similar sentiments smack of the servants' hall, anyway.

### Erase lines away

Tiny facial muscles benefit from frequent workouts. Try this simple EEE-OOO routine when you have a moment's privacy: Stretch mouth into wide grin (say "Eee" as you do it), then into little circle ("Ooo"). Frowning and eyebrow raising are out if you want smooth unlined skin! Stroke forehead to discourage lines (yes, it works!); strengthen eyelid muscles by blinking lower lids with skin held taut at sides.

### MEN AND WOMEN

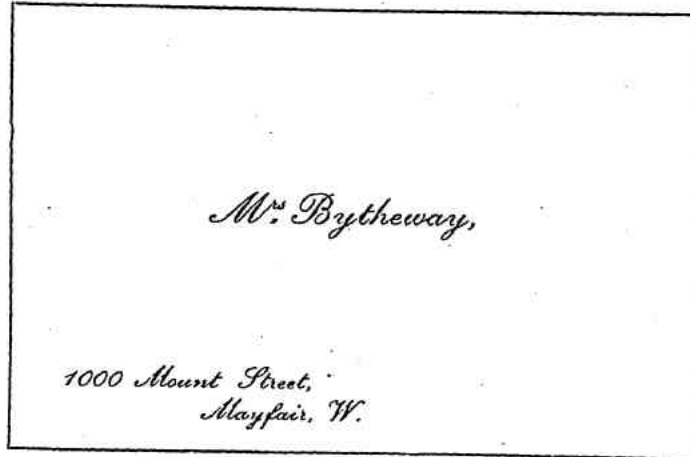
But did she pose as a stern, stiff model of business efficiency? She did not! Her face was as open and relaxed as a baby's. All through the evening she deferred to the men present and spent a great deal of time after bridge learning and teaching new dance steps, as absorbed as though the fate of the nation depended on them.

In contrast we have all seen women in comparatively unimportant business positions who seemed to think they were expected to look and act like a theatrical conception of a military general. Ugh!



A badly

engraved common card is an abomination not to be tolerated. The type used is a small copper-plate, very neat and clear, and no flourishes or attempts at ornamentation are permissible. A woman's card measures  $3\frac{5}{8}$  inches in length and  $2\frac{3}{8}$  in width; a man's,  $3\frac{1}{8}$  inches in length and just half that in width; though a fashion is creeping in of reducing the size of a lady's card slightly, probably in concession to certain card-cases in handbags. Still, the figures quoted are the orthodox ones. In both cases the name is placed exactly in the middle of the card, and below, in the left-hand corner, the address.



But "Yours sincerely" never goes wrong.

### Country House Parties

the sea, it will mean a sufficiency of washing frocks, skirts, and jumpers, etc., with a tailor suit, in which probably the journey will be made, one "smart" dress and hat for possible garden parties, etc., and two or three simple evening gowns, according to the length of the visit. If golf and tennis are included in the schedule, they, too, must have their proper provisions. And the same holds good of the country-house visits of autumn, when the tweed suits, low brogued shoes and woollen stockings are the only correct kit for tramping the moors or the stubble, jumpers and scarves, with close-fitting little hats being provided to go with them. Very few clothes are needed for such visits, but they must be good of their kind; indeed, the woman or girl who leaves such things in the hands of a good tailor is wise. In addition to this tweed outfit, a simple cool dress, or tea frock, is taken to slip into on return in time for tea, and this does for afternoon dancing as well, while, unless it is known that evening entertaining will be considerable, two or three simple evening dresses will suffice. If the visit extends beyond the usual week or so, greater variety may be needed; a serge tailor-made, in addition to the tweed or homespun, may be useful—it is often chosen for church when this enters into the scheme of things—with extra jumpers, and a knitted silk frock or other pretty dress for afternoon wear, or to go under a fur or other overcoat, if this has part in the outfit, for motoring, etc., and another evening dress may be needed.

It is a mistake to take too many clothes, however, and, except for the evening, the fashion which smiled on many changes has now passed. In the case of visits for Hunt or County balls, a swagger dance frock will be needed for each event. Perhaps, for example, a girl is asked for a week's visit in the winter, with the Hunt ball and a dance given in her hostess's house, as known entertainments. She will take the precaution to see that three really good ball dresses are included in her outfit, one for the Hunt ball, a second for that taking place in the house (for which it is a courtesy to keep the pick of the bunch in dresses, for every hostess likes to have well-dressed girls and women amongst her guests), and a third because it is very likely that an invitation to a big dance given in a neighbouring house may be received. In addition, a simple dress for wear on other nights should be provided, or even two, if circumstances permit. These, with their shoes and stockings, etc., account for a good bit, though the fashion of gold or silver shoes simplifies it very much, as one pair does for several frocks.

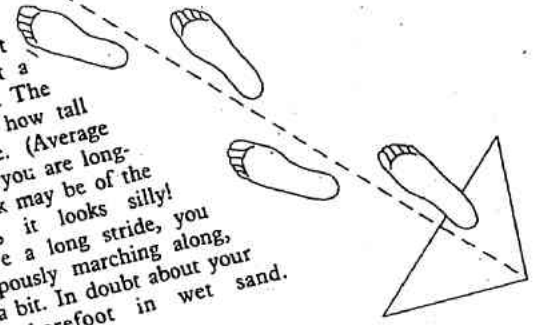
But, considerable as will be the provision for the evening, that for the daytime hours will be correspondingly simple. If she rides or hunts,

Young women should write as few letters as possible to young men and those should be impersonal. It is a wise plan to let the Brownings keep the record for love letters and even though you may be engaged do not pour out your love on paper. Your letter may be warm and carry affection in its atmosphere of interest, but a message to a young man should be read over carefully three times before it is mailed. Ask yourself if you would be embarrassed if he should lose the message and others should read it, or if you would care to face its words five or ten years from now.

Form the charming habit of writing notes of congratulation to your young friends who are graduating and in these happy messages you may spread yourself in all your literary splendour. Your thoughtfulness will be remembered an entire lifetime. Truly a bargain in charm.

An ungainly gait can spoil an otherwise gorgeous girl's impact... so if you waddle, weave, shuffle, mince, march, bob, or strut, learn to glide with queenly grace! Here's how.

When you walk, your footprints should look like this: Feet are turned out just the tiniest bit and placed in almost a straight line — only an inch or two apart. The length of your stride is determined by how tall you are and how long your legs are. (Average stride is about one foot for women.) If you are long-legged and take small strides, your walk may be of the mincing variety... like a goose, it looks silly! Conversely, if you're petite and have a long stride, you may look like a drill sergeant pompously marching along, and you need to shorten your stride a bit. In doubt about your footprint pattern? Try walking barefoot in wet sand.



We must reach down deep into truth to nourish our charm and loveliness at the roots and let the flowers of detail bloom as they will without forcing, selectively using for growth and development those things and only those things that add to the feeding of the central idea of charm.

Somehow, the charm of deep understanding invariably pictures itself forth in the detail of daily life as an instinctive knowledge of colour, arrangement of furniture, balanced positions of things in their relation to each other, and to our need of them, a deeper appreciation of music, a greater sensitiveness to others. In short, a general tuning and keying up of all our abilities is accomplished under the leadership of that recognition of ourselves as necessary parts of a rhythmic, perfectly timed universe that needs us just where we are in order to express itself at the point of each person's perception of its harmony.

Charm is a force functioning by and through laws

**WHAT DOES THE HAWKE GOVERNMENT DO FOR WOMEN?**

"... the implementation of our policies for women has been the and remains one of the top priorities for our government."

Bob Hawke, PM, January 1984

Any Labor government that gains power after years of Liberal neglect has the advantage that almost anything it does is going to look good by comparison. But how does the rhetoric translate into practice? A review of Hawke's speech in January to the Labor Women's Conference, and the provisions of the August budget, shows what sort of priority women have in government policy.

**Initiatives**

Hawke counts among the government's "proudest achievements... in raising the status of women" the following:

- upgrading the Office of the Status of Women
- 52 women appointed to government boards and bodies
- Sex Discrimination legislation and ratification of the UN Convention on Women.
- Research into the needs of Aboriginal women.

# Labouring Women

comes the structural gender-status oppression of women's work. There have been 'research and rhetoric' initiatives in non-traditional jobs for women. But without financial resources or structural reforms such as workplace childcare it is not surprising that fewer than one in five apprentices are women.

**Political Economy**

The extent and effects of the oppression of women under capitalist patriarchy is the subject of endless debate among socialists and feminists, and I do not intend to explore the theory here. It is sufficient to point out that women are on the whole, poorer than men. There are class differences between women, as is to be expected in a system that perpetrates a combination of class, race and gender oppression. I can only speculate on the long term effects of an anti-discrimination policy that benefits only a less oppressed portion of the female population. A faint sense of unease about the Office of the Status of Women among feminists may indicate a process of division and partial absorption which hinders the more radical aims of feminism in creating a different social structure. However, this is incidental to the point that women are poorer than men in terms of both power and resources.

ances, and Single Parent's benefits rise by only \$2 per week per child, the government has spent \$300 million on incentives for big business, \$30 million on defending the America's Cup, and law and order spending is up 15 percent. In this context, the claim that women's needs are a high priority must be viewed with some cynicism.

Of greater concern is that while pilot Affirmative Action programmes and CEP 'equalities' and the like provide small gains for very few women, the overall gender-status oppression of women's work is being reinforced. The government is supporting male-dominated industries such as mining, while those employing large numbers of women, such as manufacturing, are shrinking. The effect of such subsidies is to allow industries to replace people with machines, and undermine the quality of their work. The Budget reinforces a capitalist economy and does little to redistribute resources. Until the government adopts more radical policies, it may win the America's Cup, but women will continue to lose.

reprinted from Tribune 29.8.84

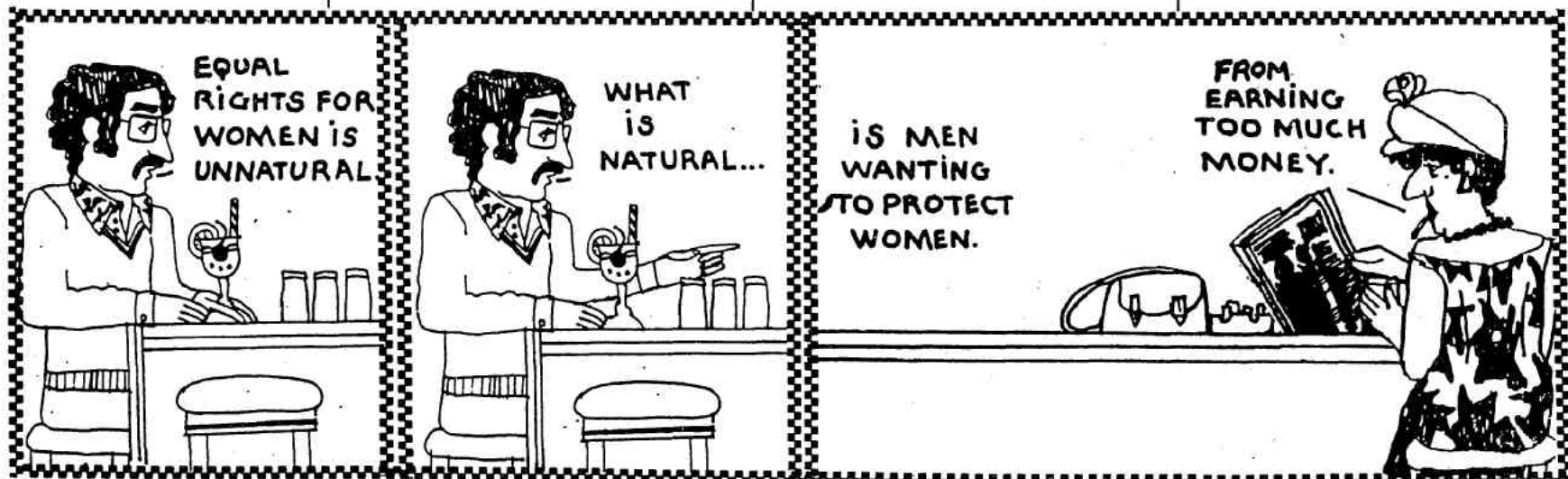
It was not until the 70s that restrictions on 'men only' and 'women only' jobs were repealed, and in 1973 the upper age limits which then applied to women for appointments as clerks, clerical assistants and typists were removed.

The 1966 Public Service Board Annual Report stated that women "were largely engaged in machine operations" and as an indication of this some 40% of total female APS workforce were employed in the old Postmaster General's Department primarily as switchboard operators.

In 1980 a Public Service Board survey showed that whereas some women had moved into traditional male areas (such as Meat Inspector, Air Traffic Controller and Flight Service Officer) this had been achieved largely with the active support of the Board. On the other hand, men had moved into nursing and social work etc. without such assistance.

The Board also found that a trend could be seen of non-graduate men being likely to reach more senior positions than non-graduate women and that the same trend could be seen in graduates. The 'equal footing' that some thought (perhaps naively) would come with the lifting of the marriage bar was still a long way from reality.

The Public Service Board's Equal Employment Opportunity programme



- Funding for "consultation, research and information programs" on women
- Increased participation of women in the ALP and more women in parliament
- Affirmation Action in the Public Service.
- Tax reform.

These "achievements" bear closer examination. What they all have in common is that they offer no practical benefit to women - or assist only a few. Research is laudable but is yet to be translated into action. Public service, parliamentary and tax reforms benefit only those women who have permanent, relatively high-status jobs. Such women are usually educated, articulate, anglo and middle-class. This is not to imply that such women should not benefit from government initiatives, or that they do not suffer from discrimination. However, such priorities show a bias towards a sort of feminism which aims only to make women and men 'equal' in the existing system.

One example of this approach is revealed in another of the Hawke government's "achievements". Hawke assures us of his "very strong personal commitment to the use of affirmative action to assist women achieve equality in the labour market... the CEP guidelines provide for 50 percent of jobs created to go to women".

Ensuring that women get half the CEP jobs is in one sense no more than the removal of bias against women; it should be a standard minimum, not a great achievement to thank Bob for. This also shows the bias inherent in an "equality" approach. Getting half the numbers doesn't mean getting half the power and status. Nothing in such initiatives over-

Hawke addresses this only in the euphemism that

"although the majority of welfare recipients are women, the majority of women are not welfare recipients."

This ignores the structural bias in marriage and defacto criteria which often excludes those most in need from even the breadline assistance of welfare. However, it would be unfair to overlook the Budget allocations which do offer practical benefits to women. These include:

- \$30 million extra for childcare services
- \$10 million extra for services for the aged and disabled
- \$4.5 million extra for women's refuges, plus \$3 million more for crisis housing

There are also allocations in the budget which will be an advantage to women in welfare and housing areas. Apart from the disappointingly inadequate funding for refuges (only residential women's services qualify, leaving Rape Crisis, counselling services etc. struggling - another example of "divide and conquer"?), these represent substantial redistribution of resources to women. However these are moneys to be spent on women, rather than rises in the living standards of individuals.

Increases in welfare payments are miniscule and will do little to relieve the plight of social security recipients (2/3 female) who live well below the poverty line. As Tribune (29.8.84) points out, the Budget's achievements for women must be seen in context. While there is no increase in Family Allow-

**WOMEN IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE**

1966 was an important milestone for women in the Australian Public Service. Historically, women in public sector employment until this time were regarded as "temporary"; their careers were not taken seriously; they were seen to be 'marking time' between school and marriage and indeed many women expected little more from their work than this 'second class' label.

In 1966 the so-called 'marriage bar' was lifted, and permanent female officers who married no longer had to resign. At the time, this was soon as a move against the discrimination of women and the legislation was introduced with the optimistic words...

"... married women will be treated on an equal footing with their colleagues so far as status, recruitment, promotion, transfer, discipline and so on are concerned."

**Permanent Female Officers as a Percentage of Total APS Workforce**

	1966	1983
2nd Division (senior service)	1+	2%
3rd Division (people with matriculation)	11.2%	24%
4th Division (people without matriculation)	24.8%	48%
Total:	19.8%	37%

+ This was one woman only out of a total of 606.

The marriage bar is often cited as one of the main reasons for the current lack of equality in the numbers of the two sexes in the Public Service, and more particularly why there are now more senior men than women. The figures below show how slow this process of moving to an "equal footing" has been.

was announced in February 1981. The program was designed to introduce voluntary EEO programs for women, migrants, Aboriginals and the disabled. The two broad aims of the EEO program for women are:

- : to increase the numbers of women in Senior Management
- : to increase the number of women in jobs not traditionally done by women.

The process is seen as a long one - as the Chairman of the Public Service Board, Peter Wilenski said in May this year "... we have taken no more than the first few steps on this journey. We are still in a situation of endemic inequality of opportunity. There is much to be done, but what has been done demonstrates that progress can be made."

Some departments are further "down the track" than others. It is a fact, however that the majority of women in the APS are still located in machine areas - these days as word processing/date processing operators; typists; stenographers and secretaries. This work is often as boring and repetitive in 1984 as it was in 1966. 23 percent of women in the APS in 1983 worked in keyboard (machine) related areas. The numbers in this group have grown by 38 percent over the last ten years compared with a 15 percent overall growth in the APS.

The impact of technological change on this group of women has been far reaching. From being traditionally non-active in workplace politics the impact of technological change appears to have raised their political awareness; and more and more are actively pursuing their rights in relation to such issues as conditions of employment; occupational health and safety and job re-design.

(All stats and quotes are from Public Service Board publications)

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## WOMEN BEWARE WOMEN

Thomas Middleton

The ANU English Department and the Campus Amateur Dramatic Society present **WOMEN BEWARE WOMEN**, a play by Thomas Middleton, ANU Arts Centre, 27 September - 6 October (Thursday to Saturday). Starts 8pm.

Prices: \$6 and \$4 (concessions)

Directed by John Gillies.

The ANU English Department and the Campus Amateur Dramatic Society have combined forces to produce *Women Beware Women*, a play by Thomas Middleton.

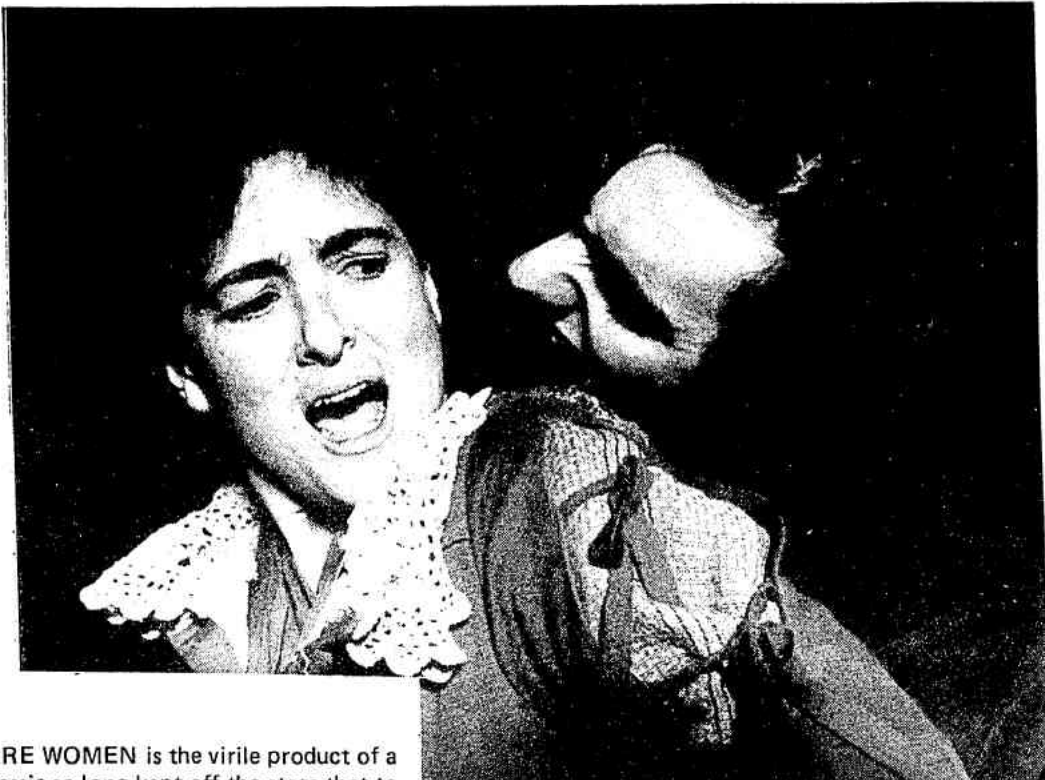
Set in Florence in the 16th Century, *WOMEN BEWARE WOMEN* traces the marital fortunes of two young women, Bianca and Isabella. Middleton takes as his theme the corruption of women's sexuality. His women are trapped by a network of social double binds. The marriage market buys economic security, but at the price of sexual denial. Elopement is social and economic suicide, and a romantic private affair is no less fatal. The "Tragedy" of this play lies in the corruption of women by men, of women by each other, of the young by the old and of social innocents by the socialized and brutalised.

Middleton was a contemporary of Shakespeare and Jonson, and his dramatic achievement is as original and as important as theirs.

Director John Gillies describes Middleton's best work as "marvellously entertaining, brilliantly plotted, powerful, disturbing and funny, with dialogue that is close to common speech yet vibrant with Shakespearean intensity and flair".

*WOMEN BEWARE WOMEN* is a play of great artistic importance and is certainly of contemporary interest. The ANU English Department and CADS offer theatre goers a rare opportunity to see a play which because of its size is unlikely to be staged by professional theatre groups.

For more information contact:  
John Gillies - 492708/492703



### The Critics

*WOMEN BEWARE WOMEN* is the virile product of a rare vision . . . a classic so long kept off the stage that to see it is to be gripped from start to finish, as if much learned writing on the subject had only hinted at its theatrical quality.

The Times (1962)

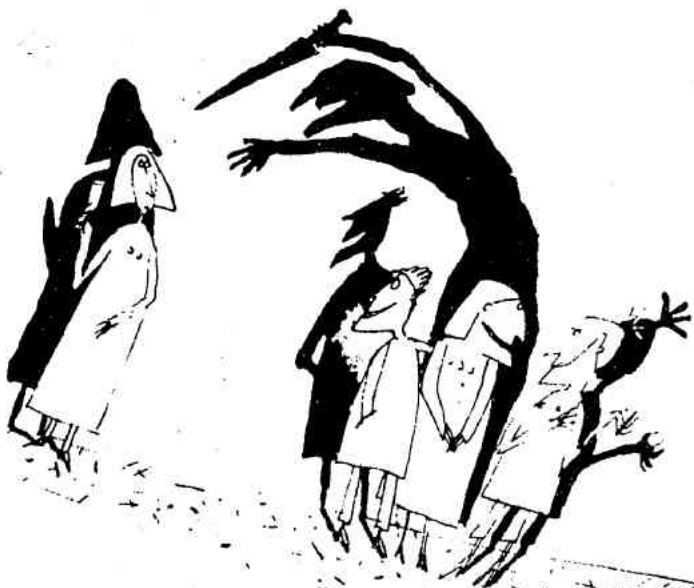
Before long Middleton's style imposed itself, intimate and stonily observant - the tone of a life long student of corrupted emotions. His theme is the marriage market, where men and women buy one another according to their wealth, and do so "under the name of perfect love" . . . Listening to the best of this play, and recalling the work of Webster, Marston, Ford, Tourneur and Kyd, one cannot imagine how the Elizabethan dramatists ever gained their reputation for boisterous, fullblooded earthiness. Their subject-matter is usually cruelty or diseased sensuality . . . Except for Shakespeare, they are nearly all amoral pessimists. And in the exception lies the answer. Shakespeare, one suddenly realises, was the great pop playwright of his era, the fulsome exalter of conservative common sense, the patriotic moralist of "Henry V", the creator of all those healthy, untainted young women . . . Apart from Cressida, none of Shakespeare's heroines is faithless to her man; and his heroes are never faithless to their mistresses. In other words, he lied about sex.

Kenneth Tynan, The Observer (1962)

*WOMEN BEWARE WOMEN* . . . speaks to us across the centuries with that accent of mesmerised self-loathing and helpless sensuality which marks the films of someone like Antonioni, or the plays of Anouilh. It shows people trapped in the armour of class and tortured by the hair shirt of sex. Once unhorsed in the tournament of ambition, they are too heavy to rise again. Once itched by bristles of desire, they must scratch until the blood flows.

Alan Brien, Sunday Telegraph, (1962)

Guardiano (Bill Ginnane) plays his queen in the marriage game with Fabritio (Ron Hill).



The ward (Jonathan O'Donnell) "contracts himself to the larder woman at midnight" (Ann Forsythe)

### a short review of a long play

The production of *Women Beware Women* is an ambitious project, involving lots of hard work and dedication. It is a long play and, with the large cast, the three and a half hours of concentrated effort of all, despite acoustic problems, is to be applauded.

The comic touches become heavier until there is no doubt of the farcical element of the play. If you can overcome your initial doubts it is worth while staying to see the last scene. The floor space becomes very limited in a comic exaggeration of Hamlet.

On the opening night, one got the feeling the actors were testing out the ground on the select few who attended. As a result I expect that the farcical elements will be emphasised as the audience reacted well to the humour of Middleton's vision of the bleak life for women in the 17th Century.

The play presents an attitude on women that may not have changed as much as we would like to believe: women conniving against women are naturally more sly and dangerous than men. The women in Middleton's play represent the same stock characters often still reflected in today's images: the rich bitch, the whore and the corrupted innocent - corrupted, of course, through another woman's actions although the men do play some necessary part in this corruption. The men seem to be excused from their actions because of their irresistible sexual urges as opposed to the women's unhealthy appetite for sex (the Adam-Eve cliché). The moral seems to be to avoid all forms of illicit love and lust entirely.

The impromptu script writing during a minor disaster in one scene - reminiscent of the Phantom of the Opera - was well handled by Bill Ginnane (Guardiano) and Jonathan O'Donnell (the Ward) and bodes well for any possible future mishaps. Other strong performances come from Margaret De Mestre as Livia and Stella Wilkie as the widow.

The full use of both stage and surroundings and the sparse scenery create a feeling of street theatre - enhanced in a few scenes through use of colourful costumes, fools, jugglers and excellent music. Both the singers from SCUNA and the renaissance musicians help to bring the play to life.

If you have a spare four dollars and a spare four hours, Thomas Middleton's *Women Beware Women at the Arts Centre* is a novel alternative to the slightly less fatal 20th century soap operas which, despite the time gap, seem to often present the same attitudes.

Tamsin Kerr

# Lesbian Line

A telephone contact service  
Tuesdays & Fridays 6.30-8.00 pm

**47 8882**



Who are we?

A collective of merry women who get together OFTEN to discuss all manner of issues relevant to women. We laugh a lot, cry sometimes and generally support each other. We exist because women need women. Lesbian women are a minority group in our society - lesbians need to support each other to affirm our belief in ourselves and in our political and sexual stand in a corrupt world.

What do we do?

We run a telephone service twice weekly, 6.30pm to 8.00pm Tuesday and Friday. You can contact us for support, information about social and other events or just a chat on 478882. Friday nights are times for dropping in at the Women's Centre, 3 Lobelia Street, O'Connor.

We are not alone!

We are part of the Coalition of Australian Lines with Melbourne, Sydney and Hobart. We're hoping that Lesbian Lines will soon start in Adelaide and Brisbane. Contact the local telephone directory for numbers.

## STUDENT EXCHANGE WITH TSUDA COLLEGE, TOKYO, JAPAN THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Under an agreement for an exchange of undergraduate students with Tsuda College, Tokyo, Japan, a student from ANU is able to go to Tsuda for one academic year, with a Tsuda student studying here for a similar period.

Tsuda College is a private liberal arts college for women. Its major fields of study are English language and literature, international and cultural studies, mathematics. Enrolments number 2,000 students enrolled for bachelor and master degrees. Special arrangements are made for overseas students to study Japanese language and literature.

Applications are invited for the 1985 academic year from women undergraduate students who will have completed at least the second year of their courses at the end of 1984. The general criteria for selection of the exchange students are:

- (a) academic excellence
- (b) seriousness of interest in the study proposed
- (c) a working knowledge of Japanese
- (d) capacity to adjust to cross-cultural changes.

The successful applicant will take a year's non-degree study in 1985 at Tsuda College. The exchange provides a sum of up to Y2,000,000 to cover fares, tuition fees and board and lodging, with a small provision for incidental expenses. The award will give a student an excellent opportunity to improve her competence in the Japanese language and to gain an understanding of life in Japan.

Students interested are asked to discuss an application with Mr Ken Healey, Faculty Secretary, Faculty of Asian Studies, in the first instance. Applications should be lodged with Mr Healey by 5 October 1984 at the latest.

Patricia M White  
Acting Registrar



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## ACT HISTORY TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

and the

## TRANSYLVANIAN ASSOCIATION OF CANBERRA

are holding a  
SEMINAR

on October 3rd 1984 at 7.30pm

in the COPLAND LECTURE THEATRE

*Was Transylvania ever Dracula Country - Facts or Fiction?*

All interested persons are cordially invited  
free of charge

Dr Lajos Kazar, Visiting Fellow, Dept of Linguistics,  
Research School of Pacific Studies.

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# a glimpse at women in Australian journalism, past and present

## YESTERYEAR

You wouldn't know it from many of the orthodox histories of Australia (Clarke, Blainey the Buffoon, et al — or any of the school textbooks I've come across) — but this women's issue of *Woroni* comes in a long and very distinguished line of women's journalism in Australia.

Most of us have heard of the 19th century *Bulletin* with its explosive mixture of radicalism and fervent chauvinistic patriotism, or even the very dull *Sydney Gazette*, or *The Lone Hand* — but what of *The Dawn*, and the *Republican*, both run by Louisa Lawson, *Women's Sphere*, or the *New Idea* (a rather more subversive precursor to the knitting and cooking manual cum gossip rag still to be found in newsag-

encies today)? What about the numbers of provincial papers run by women in many parts of Australia, in the late 19th century, a time when provincial journalism was booming?

Women's journalism of one sort or another was especially abundant in the 1890s and 1900s; when the "woman question" and women's suffrage were the subject of great debate. Vida Goldstein, who in 1903 became the first woman in the Empire to be a parliamentary candidate, ran two papers, the *Woman Voter*, and the *Women's Sphere*. Neither was narrowly concerned with the franchise for women, although that figured largely. There were articles on trade unionism, the exploitation of women workers in shops and factories, prostitution and the possible nationalisation of coal mines and transport.

Now, so far as I can ascertain, this yearning after matrimony, *pur et simple*, isn't so very general after all. Every girl dreams of a rich husband, but very few envy the humdrum connubial joys of the worn-visaged matron acting as general servant, nurse, companion and valet... For it is a utilitarian age... and many a woman writes 'Miss' on her visiting cards because Gussie laid a wealth of undying worship but only four pounds a week at her feet. There is altogether too much sympathy wasted on the unmarried woman. She is generally a cold, callous, speculative darling...

*The Bulletin, Oct 1891.*

The old theory that woman is inferior to man, dies hard in the industrial world. Though there are employers without number who freely acknowledge woman's efficiency, and often superiority in business ability, that acknowledgement does not often materialise as coin.

Women writers of more than ordinary ability receive less than half the remuneration given to men whose writing is of far inferior merit; indeed, the pay of many contributors is scarcely equal to that of the boys in the office in which they are employed.

Daily experience brings home to women workers the pressing need of organisation and political power for them, to minimise and finally abolish the sweating under which they suffer.

It is surely a slur on the men of the State that they should combine against women, knowing as they do that starvation rates of pay open up a temptation to women workers which is unknown to men. As a worker I am glad that we have at last got a woman's paper in Victoria, through which we can voice the claims of the women who work, whether with hand or brain.

*Woman's Sphere, Feb 1901.*

### "The Bonnet"

A great many women who buy or fashion their own headgear, seem to proceed upon the idea that in point of value, the bonnet is more than the head, and the hat more than the face; or that the head is a mere knob, upon which to display millinery. This must account for the masses of lace, feathers, frippery, and even parts of deceased fowls, that partly cover, or are skewered to the many female heads. The object of anything more is presumed to be for protection or for ornament, and to combine the two is supposed to belong to the art of the milliner.

Worth, the Parisian Mantua-maker, once remarked to a woman, as he was arranging a bunch of flowers on the skirt of a gown, 'You must not think that all these befrilled and trumpery things are of my taste. They are not my taste at all. I make them because you will have them'...

[Bonnet] such as from size, shape and trimming are so pronounced, monstrous and extraordinary as to leave the head under them comparatively of no account whatever in the way of interest, should be avoided by the would-be purchaser who cannot afford a new outlay every month in the year.

... in suburban places and small country towns... a dull stagnation of living prevails and no one makes the effort to strike free of its shackles, and get away from its enervating effects. [The daily life of many young women] is a dreary round of monotony...

In middle life one encounters numberless women who may be called might-have-beens. They are good to look upon, and impress one with an idea of passive force, but an evidence of pettiness or an indefinite suggestion of disappointment is traceable about the lines of the face... Her husband's interests are apart from hers and her children have all outgrown her. Questions of the hour are not vital to her, literature does not appeal to her and her mind reverts pathetically to a happy past.

The truth is every other man in journalism thinks he has a special call to print a woman's magazine, and the fact is he don't know much about us...

We could quickly fill the largest building in Sydney with women and children who now, for the sake of food and shelter, but more for the sake of what is called their 'good name', are bearing blows, insults, servitude and degradation.

— from *The Dawn*

The *Woman Voter* tended to have a separatist slant: "the moral, social and economic injustice imposed upon women" made their separate political organisation necessary, since the cause of women is "greater than party, and in nine cases out of ten, it is sacrificed to party interests."

The *Woman's Sphere* gave a scathing account of conditions for women in the workforce, including female journalists. Probably the best known of these papers is however *The Dawn*, founded by Louisa Lawson as a paper "written, printed and read by women".

*The Dawn* distinguished itself from its sister journals, not only in the subtlety of its treatment of the oppression of women and what their "emancipation" would involve, but also in its visionary conception of women's potential, once they liberated themselves, to revolutionise the rest of society, bestowing harmony, happiness and equality upon humanity.

Therefore the emphasis was always on preparing women on a very practical level, for the great Utopian mission which awaited them — freeing them from the tyrannies of "the beauty cult" and consumerism, in favour of a more self-sufficient and independent manner of living. This may sound 60s and hippyish now but the difference was that the idea behind it was never one of withdrawal from society, but of mobilisation action: "if you would help to lift the burden sin and suffering from humanity and lead them up in the heights of peace and joy, destroy man's dominance on your mind and person"

Furthermore, the discussion of issues like this — fashion, women's health and nutrition, self-reliance as opposed to dependence on manufactured goods — the need for women's refuges — acknowledged in a modern way, that the personal and the domestic could also be deeply political.

So *the Dawn* was a remarkable journal of its time: not only for its vigorous radicalism in campaigning for female suffrage, marriage and divorce reform, but also for the complexity and sensitivity with which it viewed the role of women, both as victims of male domination, and as possible initiators of a new, truer, fairer social order.

This was also the heyday of the "women's page". On some papers they only place it was thought fit for women to work. Mary Gilmour, for example, was at one stage better known for her page on the *Daily Worker* than for her poetry.

Though, generally speaking, the line taken on women's pages was essentially conservative and home-oriented — the "she-suffragits" were ridiculed but it was denied that women were really interested in higher education or the vote — there were ambiguities. Take for example, Sappho Smith in the early *Bulletin*:

One could go on; looking at the reasons for the decline in radical women's journalism after the First World War, and the corresponding boom in very tepid women's magazines, frequently written and run by men, and emphasizing the need to be the "good" little woman; or, the sudden about-turn during the 2nd World War, when it was suddenly deemed acceptable for women not only to write "hard" journalism, but actually to report from the Front itself (with a predictable emphasis on the activities of the nurses) — predictably there was a prompt reversal of this policy post-1945.

Suffice it to say, though that wherever there were words going into the printing press, there were women too — however constrained they were (and they were often very constrained) by notions of what was appropriate, and indeed possible for the fair sex to bother its little head with.

## NOW

Now, despite a real and far-reaching improvement in the position of women in journalism, the suppression of female/feminist voices, and the battle against such suppression, rages on.

There is still an obvious concentration of women writing in what is regarded as the more lightweight "soft" journalism: consumerist "lifestyle" articles, gossip, the social pages, fashions, the arts, etc.

*The Australian* still clings to its "Women's Pages". This is an odd mish-mash: from time to time it is possible to excavate the odd soupçon of an incipiently feminist perspective out of the ocean of crap that we gels are supposed to find so very engrossing — Di and her strapping brood, Mick Jagger, the Sangsters, how to crochet a tea-cosy and so on. (This same conflict can be found in some of the women's magazines — *Woman's Weekly*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Sheila*, etc. — in some ways expanded versions of the women's page formula.)

The Fairfax press is undoubtedly a little more progressive than Rupert Murdoch's News Limited (it wouldn't be hard). Journalists like Michelle Grattan, Jenni Hewitt, Wendy Bacon and Anne Summers have established themselves as serious political correspondents, mainly working inside the Fairfax group. This is especially impressive considering that well into the 1960s



"HE NEVER TOLD HIS LOVE."

HE (to the new barmaid): "WAAL, AND WHAT'S YOUR NAME, THEN?"  
SHE: "MY NAME IS PEARL, SIR."  
HE (with expression): "HEY! AND ARE YOU THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE?"  
SHE: "NO, SIR. I'M THE PEARL THAT WAS CAST BEFORE SWINE."

# FROM THE LAKESIDE

ANU SAILING CLUB HOSTS MINI-IV Results were:

With the advent of spring activity on the lake is intensifying, and the thoughts of Canberra's sailing population turning to wind and water. The new season appears to have brought the annual turnover of classes with it. Amongst other changes there have been sighted a few more 505s than last year. Already the lake has hosted three well-attended regattas. The Canberra Yacht Club Opening Regatta (concurrently with Ferry Race, and celebrations marking the first anniversary of the Australia II victory) and the YMCA Sailing Club "Heart-starter" Regatta, were both held over the weekend 22 to 23 September. The ANU Sailing Club launched into the season with its Mini-IV Regatta, held over the weekend of 31 August to 2 September

Crews competed from ANU, Macquarie, Monash, NSW, Sydney, and Wollongong Universities — a total of 22 boats in three divisions. Two of the four races were complete drifters. A little excitement was provided in the third race by a storm, and finally the fourth race brought with it a good 15 knot breeze with gusts up to 20.

Members of interstate teams either slept in the ANU clubhouse or were billeted with ANU club members. Socializing included a visit to Dalat, BBQs and a spit-roast on the Saturday evening. However competition did not end till late into that night, with the non-trophy boat races — won outright by Monash. All tastes were catered for, and whilst Monash reduced themselves to a state of complete obliteration, other visitors sipped Milo and discussed the meaning of life etc. etc. . . .

Division 1: Sharpies  
1. P. Ottesen (Yot, ANU)  
2. P. Quibell (Carn, Synonomous, Monash)  
3. A. Liddle (Kinda Lingers, Wollongong)

Division 2: Monohulls  
1. A. McNee (Laser, YMCA)  
2. G. McDougall (Tasar, ANU)  
3. S. Wild (Laser II, ANU)

Division 3: Multi-Hulls  
1. D. Lawrence (Mari 3-3)  
2. R. Ortner (Hobie 14)

Thanks are due to the many people who helped over the weekend. It was also very encouraging to see a large number of ANU boats on the water, and novices from several clubs racing and enjoying it.

## CLUB MEMBERSHIP

The ANU Sailing Club AGM was held on Thursday 20 September. As well as the election of new committee members, club members were also reminded that the annual subscription — now the grand sum of twenty dollars (\$20.00) is due. New members are always welcome, and encouraged — the next sailing school is to be conducted in early December at the end of the exam break.

So for the price of one hour's windsurfer hire, come and spend the hot Canberra summer sailing one of ANU's large fleet of Lasers, Windsurfers and other boats. For information, phone Debbie Gillat: 95 2670 (h) or Peter Ottesen: 72 5511 (w) or contact the Sports Union

Miranda Korzy

(Continued from previous page . . .)

at the *Herald*, it was virtually unheard of for women to write anything other than women's page material, human interest stories and the occasional arts-related piece if they were lucky. And the previously all-male preserve of cartooning has been successfully infiltrated by Victoria Roberts, Jenny Coopes and Mary Leunig, among others.

At the same time though, it is not difficult to uncover a distinctly strong stream of anti-feminism (not to mention the inevitable and widespread sexism) in Fairfax papers.

The Sydney Morning Herald, for instance, seems to hold an uncanny veneration for Leonie Kramer's every utterance and positively seeks the old thing out: recently, this has included her favourite novels, what she most "wants for Australia" in 1988, and, prominently placed, her dismissal of the principle of affirmative action — with the astoundingly simple-minded (and oddly self-effacing) argument, along the lines that "I've got where I am without it, so any woman who hasn't must be too stupid."

And, not long ago, at the leftist liberalish *National Times* (home of Women's Role snippets and the infamous *Dolly Colour* spread — much to her horror) the Deputy Editor, Adele Horan, was subjected to what was perhaps a subtle form of discrimination, when

it was resolved that the paper should appoint a managing editor (male) as well as the editor (male) above her. A decision which effectively demoted her into an editorial vacuum.

This was seen by some as being in reaction to the decidedly "feminist slant" of her editorial practice. A strike mounted by journalists in the paper in response was unsuccessful.

On the plus side, though — apart from an accelerating expropriation of "serious" journalism by women and the increasing presence of feminism in some of the mainstream papers as a force to be reckoned with, there is now a healthy and multiplying patch of publications with a feminist orientation in Australia: *Refractory Girl*, *Girls' Own Paper*, *Bluestocking*, *Scarlet Woman*, *Womanspeak*, *Hecate*

Unfortunately, *Hecate* — a Brisbane-based interdisciplinary journal — is having trouble at the moment. It's currently being sued for defamation over an article dealing with the sexual harassment and appalling work conditions of female staff at Brisbane's Courier-Mail newspaper.

The battle isn't over yet . . .

Morgan Thomas

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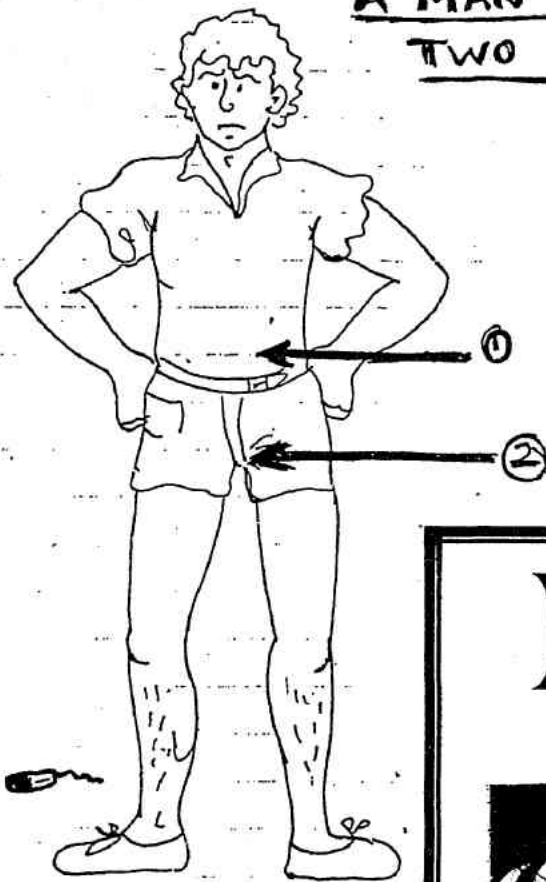
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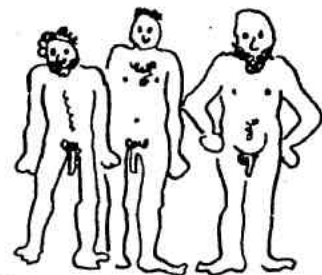
cartoons by Denise



## A MAN IN TWO MINDS



## AIRY NOTHINGS



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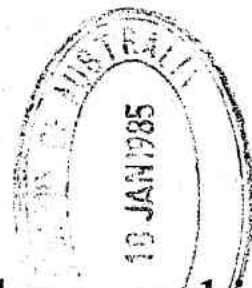
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# BECAUSE WE'RE WOMEN



Because woman's work is never done and is underpaid or unpaid or boring or repetitious and we're the first to get the sack and what we look like is more important than what we do and if we get raped it's our fault and if we get bashed we must have provoked it and if we raise our voices we're nagging bitches and if we enjoy sex we're nymphos and if we don't we're frigid and if we love women it's because we can't get a "real" man and if we ask our doctor too many questions we're neurotic and/or pushy and if we expect community care for children we're selfish and if we stand up for our rights we're aggressive and "unfeminine" and if we don't we're typical weak females and if we want to get married we're out to trap a man and if we don't we're unnatural and because we still can't get an adequate safe contraceptive but men can walk on the moon and if we can't cope or don't want a pregnancy we're made to feel guilty about abortion and . . . . . for lots and lots of other reasons we are part of the women's liberation movement.

Joyce Stevens

Written for Women's Liberation Broadsheet, International Women's Day, 1975.

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